2.

CHRISTIAN LETTERS

FULL OF

Spiritual Instructions,

TENDING

To the Promoting of the Power

OF

GODLINESS,

BOTH IN

PERSON and FAMILIES.

LONDON,

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BRITISH MUSEUM

CHRISTIAN LETTERS;

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To the Promoting of the Power of Godlineſs, both in Perſons, and Families.

LETTER. I.

To his Wife to Diſpoſe her to his Acceptance of Taunton, *on ſmall Maintenance.*

My Dear Heart,

BY this time I hope thou haſt received mine by *Martin*, and alſo an Anſwer touching their Reſolution at *Taunton*. My thoughts have been much upon that buſineſs of late, ſo ſmall as the outward Incouragements in point of Maintenance are, and methinks I find my heart much inclining that way. I will tell thee the Principles upon which I go.

Firſt, I lay this for a Fouudation, That a mans Life conſiſteth not in the Abundance of the things that he poſſeſſeth. It was accounted a wiſe Prayer that *Agur* put up of old, that he might only be Fed with Food convenient for him. And certain it is that where men have leaſt of the World; they ſeem it leaſt, and live more by Faith and in dependance

 upon

upon God, casting their care and burden upon him. O the sweet breathings of *Davids* soul! the strong actings of his Faith and Love, that we find come from him, when his condition was low and mean in the World. How closely doth he cling? How fully doth he Relie upon God? The Holy Ghost seems to make it a Priviledge to be brought to a necessity of living by Faith, as, I think, I have formerly hinted thee, out of *Deut.* 11. 10, 11. Where *Canaan* is prefer'd before *Ægypt*, in regard of its dependance upon God for the former and latter Rain, which in *Ægypt* they could live without, and have supplies from the River. And certainly could we that are unexperienced, but feel the Thorns of those cares and troubles that there are in gathering and keeping much, and the danger when Riches increase of setting our hearts upon them, we should prize the happiness of a middle condition much before it. Doubtless, Godliness with contentment, is great gain. *Seekest thou great things for thy self* (saith the Prophet to *Baruch*) *seek them not.* Certainly a good Conscience is a continual Feast, and enough for a happy Life: no man that Wareth intangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a Souldier. We should be but little incumbred with the things of this World, and withal free from a world of intanglements, which in a great place committed wholly to our charge, would be upon our Consciences as no small Burden.

Secondly, I take this for an undoubted truth, that a dram of Grace, is better than a Talent of Wealth; and therefore such a place where our Consciences would be free, and we had little to do in the World to take off our hearts and thoughts from the things of Eternity, and had the advantage of abundance of means, and the daily opportunities of warming our hearts with the blessed Society and Conference of Heavenly Christians, and no temptations to carry us away, nor discouragements in our walking with God, and the due performance of our duty is (if we pass a true and Spiritual Judgement, as the Holy Ghost in Scripture would) without comparison before another place, void of those Spiritual helps and advantages. Let us think with our selves, what though our Purses, our Estates, may thrive better

in

in a place of a large maintenance? yet where are our graces, our ſouls, like to thrive any way anſwerable to what they are in this? We ſhould have but little in the World, and we could live hereafter; but alas, what is this if it be made up to us, as it will ſurely be in Communion with God and his People? If we thrive in Faith, and Love, Humility, and Heavenly mindedneſs, as above all places I know we are likely to do there, what matter is it though we do not raiſe our ſelves in the World? the thing it may well be accounted but mean; but alas, let us look upon it with a ſpiritual Eye, and then we ſhall paſs another Judgement of it. Oh! who would leave ſo much Grace, and ſo much comfort in Communion with Chriſt and his Saints, as we may gain there, for the probabilities of living with a little more gentility and handſomneſs in the World? 'Tis a ſtrange thing to ſee how Chriſtians generally do judge ſo carnally of things, looking to the things that are ſeen and Temporal, and not the things that will ſtick by us to Eternity. What is it worth a year? is the Maintenance certain and ſure? What charges are there like to be? theſe are the queſtions we commonly ask firſt, when we ſpeak of ſetling. But alas, though thoſe things are duly to be conſidered too, yet what good am I like to do? what good am I like to get? (Both which queſtions I think might be as comfortably Anſwered concerning this, as any place in *England*;) Theſe ſhould be the main interrogatories, and the chief things we ſhould judge of a place to ſettle in. What if we have but a little in the World? Why then we muſt keep but a ſhort Table, and ſhall make but a little noiſe in the World, and muſt give the meaner entertainments to our Friends. O but will not this be abundantly made up, if we have more outward and inward Peace, as we may well count we ſhall have. One dram of ſaving Grace will weigh down all this. Let others Hug themſelves in their Corn, and Wine, and Oyl, in their fat Livings, and their large Tables, and their great reſort, if we have more of the Light of Gods Countenance, more grace, more comfort, who would change with them? ſurely if *Paul* were to choſe a Place, he would not look ſo much what 'twas a year, but would wiſh us to take that where we might be moſt likely to ſave our own and others Souls.

Thirdly, That the beſt and the ſureſt way to have any outward Mercy, is to be content to want it. When mens deſires are over-eager after the World, they muſt have thus much a Year, and a Houſe well Furniſhed, and Wife, and Children, thus and thus qualified, or elſe they will not be content; God doth uſually, if not conſtantly, break their wills by denying them, as one would croſs a froward Child of his ſtubborn humour: or elſe puts a ſting into them, that a man had been as good he had been without them, as a man would give a thing to a froppiſh Child, but it may be with a knock on his Fingers, and a frown to boot. The beſt way to get Riches, is out of doubt to ſet them loweſt in ones deſires. *Solomon* found it ſo: Alas, he did not ask riches, but wiſdom and ability, to diſcharge his great Truſt; but God was ſo pleaſed with his Prayer, that he threw in them into the Bargain. If we ſeek the Kingdom of God, and his Righteouſneſs in the firſt place, and leave other things to him, God will not ſtand with us for theſe outwards, though we never ask them we ſhall have them as over meaſure; God will throw them in as the Vantage. And to this ſuits the experience of our dear *Honorathius*: and indeed (ſaith he, ſpeaking of God) *Honorathius* finds that his only hiding place and refuge, and a place of ſuccour, from the ſtorms that fall upon him, and hath had ſuch helps at a dead lift there, that he is engaged for ever to truſt theſe. For when he hath been loweſt, and in the greateſt ſtraights, he hath gone and made his moan Heaven-ward, with free ſubmiſſion to the rightful diſpoſer of all things, and he hath been ſo liberally ſupplied, as makes him very confident the beſt way to obtain any Mercy, or ſupply, is to be content to be without it: And he is perſwaded nothing ſet Gods Mercies farther off, than want of free ſubmiſſion to want them. Certainly, God will never be behind hand with us. Let our care be to build his Houſe, and let him alone to build ours.

Fourthly, That none ever was, or ever ſhall be, a loſer by Jeſus Chriſt. Many have loſt much for him, but never did, never ſhall any loſe by him. Take this for a certainty, whatſoever probabilities of outward comforts we leave, whatſoever outward advantages we balk, that we may glorifie him in our Services, and enjoy him in his Ordinances more than otherwhere

where we could, we shall receive an hundred fold in this life. 'Tis a sad thing to see how little Christ is trusted or believe in the World: Men will trust him no farther then they can see him, and will leave no work for Faith. Alas, hath he not a thousand ways, both outward and inward, to make up a little outward disadvantage to us? What doth our Faith serve for? Have any ventured themselves upon him in his way, but he made good every word of the Promise to them? let us therefore exercise our Faith, and stay our selves upon the Promise, and see if ever we are ashamed of our hope.

Fifthly, That what is wanting in the means, God will make up in the blessing. This I take for a certain truth, while a man commits himself and his affairs to God, and is in a way that God put him into: Now if a man have but a little income, if he have a great Blessing, that's enough to make it up. Alas, we must not account Mercies by the Bulk. What if another have a pound to my Ounce, if mine be gold for his silver, I will never change with him. As 'tis not Bread that keeps men alive, but the Word of Blessing that proceedeth out of his mouth of God; so 'tis not the largerness of the means, but the blessing of the Lord that maketh rich. Oh! if men did but believe this, they would not grasp so much of the world as they do. Well, let others take their course, and we will take ours, to wait upon God by Faith and Prayer, and rest in his Promise; and I am confident that is the way to be provided for: Let others toyl to enlarge their income, (but alas, they will find they go not the right way to work) we will bless God to enlarge our blessing, and I doubt not but we shall prove the Gainers.

Sixthly, That every Condition hath its Snares, Crosses, and Troubles, and therefore we may not expect to be without them where ever we be, only that condition is most eligible that hath fewest and least. *I* cannot object any thing against the proposal of *Taunton*, but the meaness of the maintenance; but if our income be but short, we can *I* hope be content to live answerably, we must fare the meaner, that will be all the inconvenience that *I* know, and truly *I* hope we are not of the nature of that Animal, that hath his Heart in his Belly. *I* know how *Daniel* thrived by his Water and pulse, and think a mean Diet is as wholesome to the body, yea,

and far leſs hurtful than a full and liberal is; and perſwade my ſelf it would be no ſuch hard matter for us contentedly to deny our fleſh in this reſpect. But let us conſider how little and utterly inconſiderable this inconvenience is, in compariſon of thoſe we muſt reckon upon meeting with, if God caſt us into another place, and whether this be not a great deal leſs than the trouble we ſhall have for want of comfortable and Chriſtian Society, for want of the frequent and quickening means we ſhall here have, in wrangling and contending with the Covetous, or elſe loſing our dues, in the Railings and ſcandalous, and malicious Reports, that are we ſee raiſed upon the beſt by the wicked in moſt places, in their contentions about their right to the Sacraments, in our intanglement in the cares and troubles of this life, *&c.* all which we ſhould be here exempted from. Upon theſe and the like conſiderations, I find my heart very much inclined to accept of their offer at *Taunton*. I beſeech thee to weigh, and throughly conſider the matter, and tell me impartially thy thoughts, and which way thy Spirit inclines, for I have always reſolved the place I ſettled in ſhould be thy choice, and to thy content. The leaſt intimation of thy will to the contrary, ſhall overballance all my thoughts of ſettling there, for I ſhould account it the greateſt unhappineſs if I ſhould thus ſettle, and thou ſhouldſt afterwards be diſcontented at the ſtraightneſs of our condition. But I need not have Wrote this, hadſt not thou fully ſignified thy mind already to me, I had never gone ſo far as I have. Well, the Lord whoſe we are, and whom we ſerve, do with us as it ſhall ſeem good unto him. We are alwayes as mindful as is poſſible of thee here, both together and apart. Captain *Lake* deſired me to intreat thee to meet him one two hours in a day, for the Commemoration of Mercies upon the twenty third day of every Month. Send word to me of their Reſolution at *Taunton*, in two Letters, leaſt poſſibly one ſhould miſcarry, though never a one did yet. I dare not think of ſettling under ſixty Pound at *Taunton*, and ſurely it cannot be leſs. I have Written as well as I could on a ſudden my mind to thee, I have been ſo large in delivering my Judgement, that I muſt thruſt up my Affections into a Corner. Well, though they have but a

corner

corner in my Letter, *I* am ſure they have room enough in my heart: But *I* muſt conclude; The Lord keep thee my Dear, and cheriſh thee for ever in his Boſom. Farewel mine own Soul,

I am as ever thine own Heart,

JOS. ALLEINE

Oxon, May 27. 1659.

LETTER II.

[Prepare for Suffering.]

To my dearly beloved the Flock of Chriſt in Taunton, *Grace and Peace.*

Moſt dear Chriſtians,

MY extream ſtraights of time will now force me to bind my long loves in a few ſhort lines; yet I could not tell how to leave you unſaluted, nor chuſe but write to you in a few words, that you ſhould not be diſmayed neither at our preſent ſufferings, or at the evil tidings that by this time I doubt not are come unto you. Now, Brethren, is the time when the Lord is like to put you upon the trial; now is the hour of temptation come. Oh! be faithful to Chriſt to the death, and he ſhall give you a Crown of life. Faithful is he that hath called you, and he will not ſuffer you upon his faithfulneſs to be tempted above what you are able. Give up your ſelves and your All to the Lord, with reſolution to follow him fully, and two things be ſure of, and lay up as ſure grounds of everlaſting conſolation.

1. If you ſeek by prayer and ſtudy to know the mind of God, and do reſolve to follow it in uprightneſs, you ſhall not fail either of direction or pardon; either God will ſhew you what his pleaſure is, or will certainly forgive you if you miſs your way. Brethren, fix upon your ſouls the deep and lively affecting apprehenſions of the moſt gracious, loving, merciful, ſweet,

ſweet, compaſſionate, tender nature of your Heavenly Father, which is ſo great that you may be ſure he will with all readineſs and love accept of his poor Children when they endeavours to approve themſelves in ſincerity to him, and would fain know his mind and do it, if they could but clearly ſee it, though they ſhould unwillingly miſtake.

2. That as ſure as God is faithful, if he do ſee that ſuch or ſuch a temptation (with the forethought of which you may be apt to diſquiet your ſelves, leſt you ſhould fall away when thus or thus tried) will be too hard for your Graces, he will never ſuffer it to come upon you. Let not, my dear Brethren, let not the preſent tribulations or thoſe impending move you. This is the way of the Kingdom: perſecution is one of your Land marks: ſelf-denial and taking up the Croſs is your *A B C* of Religion; you have learnt nothing, that have not begun at Chriſts-Croſs. Brethren, the Croſs of Chriſt is your Crown, the reproach of Chriſt is your riches; the ſhame of Chriſt is your glory; the damage attending ſtrict and holy diligence, your greateſt advantage: ſenſible you ſhould be of what is coming, but not diſcouraged; humbled, but not diſmayed; having your hearts broken, and yet your ſpirits unbroken; humble your ſelves mightily under the mighty hand of God; but fear not the face of man: may you even be low in humility, but high in courage; little in your own apprehenſions of your ſelves, but great in holy fortitude, reſolution and holy magnanimity, lying in the duſt before your God, yet triumphing in faith and hope, and boldneſs and confidence over all the power of the enemies. Approve your ſelves as good Souldiers of Jeſus Chriſt, with no *Armour*, but that of righteouſneſs; *No weapons*, but ſtrong crying and tears; looking for no Victory but that of Faith; nor hope to overcome, but by patience: now for the faith and patience of the Saints, now for the harneſs of your ſuffering Grace: O gird up the loyns of your mind, and be ſober, and hope to the end: *Fight not* but *the good fight of Faith*: here you muſt contend and that earneſtly: Strive not but againſt ſin, and here you may reſiſt even unto blood: now ſee that you chuſe life, and embrace affliction rather than ſin. Strive together mightily and frequently by prayer: I know you do, but I would you ſhould abound more and more: Share my loves among

among you, and continue your earneſt prayers for me, and be your aſſured that I am and ſhall be through Grace, a willing thankful Servant of your Souls concernments.

From the common Goale
May 2. 1663.

Joſeph Alleine.

LETTER III.

[Warning to Profeſſors.]

To my moſt dearly beloved, my Chriſtian Friends in Taunton, *Salvation.*

Moſt loving Brethren,

I Shall never forget your old kindneſſes, and the entire affections that you have ſhed upon me, not by drops, but by floods, would I never ſo fain forget them, yet I could not, they are ſo continually renowned; for there is never a day but I hear of them; Nay, more than hear of them, I feel and taſte them. The God that hath promiſed to them that give to a *Prophet* though but a cup of cold Water, ſhall receive a *Prophets* reward; he will recompence your labour of love, your fervent prayers, and conſtant cryes, your care for my welfare, your bountiful ſupplies who have given me, not a cup of cold water, but the Wine of your loves, with the ſenſe and tidings whereof I am continually refreſhed. I muſt, I do and will bleſs the Lord as long as I live, that he hath caſt my lot in ſo fair a place, to dwell in your communion; and eſpecially to go in and out before you, and to be the Meſſenger of the Lord of Hoſt to you, to proclaim his Law, and to Preach his Excellencies, to be his Spokeſman to you, and to wooe for him, and to eſpouſe you to one Husband, and to preſent you as a chaſte Virgin unto Chriſt. Lord! how unworthy am I, everlaſtingly unworthy of this glorious Dignity, which I do verily believe the moſt brighteſt Angels in Heaven

Heaven would be glad of, if the Lord ſaw it fit to imploy them in this work! Well, I do not, I cannot repent, notwithſtanding all the difficulties and inconveniences that do attend his diſpiſed Servants, and hated ways, and that are like to attend them; for we have but ſipped yet of the Cup; but I have ſet my hand to his plow; my Miniſtry I took up with you, and my Teſtimony I finiſhed with you, though I thought I had eſpouſed you till death; and when I was entred into that Sacred Office, which through rich Grace I was imployed in, I told you in the cloſe of what I ſpake before the laying of the holy Hands upon me (moſt gladly do I take up this Office with all the perſecution, affliction, difficulties an tribulation and inconveniencies that do and may attend it) and bleſſed be God, I am through his goodneſs of the ſame mind ſtill, and my tribulations for Chriſt, do (to him be Glory, for to me belongs nothing but ſhame and confuſion of face) confirm my choice and my reſolution to ſerve him with much more than my labours. Verily, Brethren, it is a good choice that I have commended to you: Oh! that there might not one be found among you that hath not made *Maries* choice, I mean of that good part which ſhall never be taken away from you. Brethren, let them take up with the world that have no better portion: be content that they ſhould carry the Bell, and bear away the riches and perferments and glory, and ſplendor of the World. Alas! you have no reaſon to envy them: verily, they have a lye in their right hand: Ah! how ſoon will their hopes fail them: how ſoon will the crackling blaſt be out, and leave them in eternal darkneſs: they ſhall go to the generation of their Fathers, they ſhall never ſee light, like ſheep they ſhall be laid in their Graves, and the upright ſhall have Dominion over them in the morning. But for my Brethren, I am jealous that none of you ſhould come ſhort of the Glory of God. I am ambitious for you that you ſhould be all the heirs of an endleſs life, the living hopes of the Saints, the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fades not away.

Ah my Brethren! why ſhould not you be all happy? I am jealous for you with a Godly jealouſie, leſt a promiſe being left you of entering into his reſt, any of you ſhould come ſhort of it. O look diligently, leſt any man fail of the Grace

of

of God: Alas! how it pities me to see this Rest neglected: How it grieves me that any of you should fall short of mercy at last! That any of that flock over which the holy Ghost hath made be in part overseer, should perish; when Christ hath done so much for you, and when his under Officers (through his Grace, for we are not sufficient of our selves) have done somewhat to recover and save them. Ah dear Brethren! I was in great earnest with you when I besought you out of the Pulpit, many a time, to give a Bill of Divorce to your sins, and to accept of the match and the mercy that in the name of God Almighty I did there offer to you. Alas! how it pitied me to look over so great a Congregation, and to think that I could not, for my life I could not, perswade them, one quarter of them, in likelihood to be saved? how it moved me to see your diligence in flocking, not only to the stated Exercises, but to the Repetitions and to most hazardous opportunities, for which you are greatly to be commended, since the Law forbad my publick Preaching, and yet to think that many of you that went so far, were like to perish for ever for want of going further. I must praise your diligent attendance on all opportunities: Blessed be God that made a willing ministry and a willing people: for I remember how *I* have gone furnished with a Train! How *I* went with the multitude to the House of God, with the voice of joy and praises, with the multitude that kept Holy-days. The remembrance of which moves my soul, but, O my flock, my most dear flock, how fain would *I* carry you farther then the external and outward profession; O! how loath am *I* to leave you there! How troubled to think that any of you should go far and hazard much for Religion, and yet miscarry for ever by the hand of some unmortified lust! as secret pride or untamed passion, or an unbridled tongue, or which *I* fear most of all, a predominate love of the World in your hearts. Alas! must it be so, and is there no remedy but *I* must carry you to Heavens-gate and leave you there! Oh, that *I* should leave the work of your Souls but half done; and bring you no farther than the *almost* of Christianity, Hear, O my people, hear, although *I* may command you, upon your utmost peril in the Name of the Lord Jesus that shall shortly judge you, *I* beseech you, *I* warn you as a Father doth his

Children,

Children, to look to the ſetling and ſecuring of your everlaſting condition; and for life take heed of your reſting in the outter-part of Religion, but to be reſtleſs till you find the through-change of Regeneration within, that you are quite new in the frame and bent of your hearts: for here is the main of Religion in the hidden man of the heart: for Chriſts ſake, for your Soul-ſake look to it, that you build upon the Rock, that you be ſure in the Foundation work, that you do unfeignedly deliver over your ſelves to the Lord to be under his command and at his diſpoſe in all things: ſee that you make no exceptions, no reſerve, that you caſt over board all your worldly hopes, and count upon parting with all for Chriſt: that you take him alone for your whole happineſs. Wonder not that I often inculcate this: If it be well here, it is well all; if unſound here, the error is in the foundation, and you are undone. Brethren, I ſee great tryals coming, when we ſhall ſee Profeſſors fall like leaves in the Autumn, unleſs they be well ſetled: therefore is it that I would ſo fain have you look to your ſtanding, and to ſecure the main. And for you whoſe Souls are ſoundly wrought upon, O make ſure whatever you do: get and keep your evidences clear! How dreadful would your temptations be, if you ſhould be called to part with all for Chriſt, and not be ſure of him neither: get a right and clear underſtanding of the terms of life, which I have ſet before you in that form of Covenanting with God in Chriſt, that I commended to you. I would that none of you ſhould be without a Copy of it: be much in obſerving your own hearts, both in duties and out-crying mightily to God for aſſurance: If you cannot diſcern your eſtate your ſelves, go to ſome body that is albe and faithful, and fully open your Caſe, your Evidences and doubts, and be extraordinary ſtrict and watchful in your whole courſe, and I doubt not but you will quickly grow up to aſſurance.

I cannot tell how to make an end, methinks I could write all the day to you, but my ſtraights of time are great, and my Letter already too long, yet I cannot conclude till I have given you my unfeigned thanks for your moſt kind and gracious Letter. Surely it ſhall be in ſtore with me, and laid up among my Treaſures; that God is pleaſed ſo to unite your hearts to me, and to make uſe of me for your edification, is

matter

matter of higheſt joy unto me; as alſo to ſee your ſtedfaſtneſs in Chriſt, your unſhaken reſolutions, notwithſtanding all the Tempters wiles. Go on, my dearly Beloved, and the Lord ſtrengthen your hands and your hearts, and lift you up above the fears of men. My moſt dear Brother *Norman* ſalutes you with manifold Loves and Reſpects, earneſtly wiſhing that you may wear the Crown of perſeverance; as alſo Brother *Turner*. The Lord ſtrengthen, eſtabliſh, ſettle you, and after you have ſuffered a while, make you perfect: I leave my Brethren in the everlaſting Arms, and reſt,

Your Embaſſador in bonds,

From the common Goale at Juelcheſter, *June* 13*th*. 1663.

Joſeph Alleine.

LETTER IV.

[A Call to the Unconverted.]

To the Beloved People the Inhabitants of the Town of Taunton, *Grace, Mercy, and Peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

Moſt endeared and beloved Friends:

I Do moſt readily acknowledge my ſelf a Debtor to you all, and a Servant of all, and therefore I have ſent theſe few Lines to ſalute you all. My Lines did fall in a fair place when the Lord did caſt my lot among you; for which I deſire to be thankful. God hath been pleaſed to work a mutual affection between me and you. I remember the tears and Prayers that you have ſent me hither with, and how I ſaw your hearts in your eyes; How can I forget how you poured out your Souls upon me. And truly you are a People much upon my heart, whoſe welfare is the matter of my continual prayers, care, and ſtudy. And oh! that I knew how to do you good: Ah? how certainly ſhould never a ſon of you

you miſcarry if I knew how to ſave you. Ah! how it pities me to think how that ſo many of you ſhould remain in your ſins after ſo many and ſo long endeavours to convert and bring them in. Once more, Oh! my beloved, once more hear the call of the moſt high God unto you. The Priſon Preaches to you, the ſame Doctrine that the Pulpit did. Hear, O People, hear; he that hath an ear let him hear. The Lord of Life and of Glory offers you all Mercy, and Peace, and Bleſſedneſs: Oh, why ſhould you die! whoſoever will, let him take of the Waters of Life freely; what miſs of life when it is to be had for the taking? God forbid. O my Brethren, my ſoul yerns for you, and my bowels towards you. Ah! that I did but know what Arguments to uſe with you: who ſhall chuſe my words for me that I may prevail with ſinners not to reject their own Mercy: how ſhall I get within them? How ſhall I reach them? Oh! that I did but know the words that would pierce them? that I could but get between their ſins and them. Beloved Brethren, the Lord Jeſus hath made me, moſt unworthy, his Spokeſman, to beſpeak your hearts for him: And oh, that I knew but how to wooe for him, that I might prevail! theſe eight years have I been calling, and yet how great a part do remain viſibly in their ſins, and how few, alas! how few ſouls have I gained to Chriſt by ſound converſion. Once more I deſire with all poſſible earneſtneſs to apply my ſelf to you, I have thought it may be a Sermon out of a Priſon might do that which I could not do after my long ſtriving with you, but have left undone: come then, O Friends, and let us reaſon together.

Many among you remain under the power of Ignorance: Ah! how often have I told you the dangerous, yea, damnable eſtate that ſuch are in. Never make excuſes, nor flatter your ſelves that you ſhall be ſaved though you go on in this; I have told you often, and now tell you again, God muſt be falſe of his Word, if ever you be ſaved without being brought out of the ſtate of ignorance: If ever you enter in at the door of Heaven, it muſt be by the Key of Knowledge, you cannot be ſaved, except you be brought to the knowledge of the Truth. A people that remain in groſs ignorance, that are without underſtanding, the Lord that made them, will not have mercy on them. O why will you flatter your ſelves,

and

and wilfully deceive your own ſelves? when the God of Truth hath ſaid you ſhall ſurely die if you go on in this eſtate: Oh, for the love of God and of your ſouls, I beſeech you awake and beſtir your ſelves to get the ſaving knowledge of God: you that are capable of learning a Trade to live by, are you not capable of learning the way to be ſaved? yea, I doubt not but you are capable if you would but beat your heads about it, and take pains to get it. And is it not pity that you ſhould periſh for ever for want of a little pains, and ſtudy, and care to get the knowledge of God: Study the Catechiſm, if poſſible get it by heart, if not, read it often, or get it read to you, cry unto God for knowledge; improve the little you have by living anſwerable. Search the Scripture daily, get them read to you if you cannot read them. Improve your Sabbaths diligently, and I doubt not but in the uſe of theſe means you will ſooner arrive to the knowledge of Chriſt than of a Trade. But for thee, O hardned ſinner, that wilt make thy excuſes that thou haſt not time nor abilities to get knowledge, and to ſit ſtill without it, I pronounce unto thee that thou ſhalt ſurely periſh: And I challenge thee to tell me, if thou canſt, how thou wilt anſwer it before the moſt High God when he ſhall ſit in Judgement upon thee, that thou wouldeſt be contented to undergo a ſeven years Apprentiſhip to learn how to get thy living, and that thou mighteſt have got the knowledge of the principles of Religion in half the time, but thou wouldeſt not beat thy head about it.

Many are ſwallowed up in meer profaneneſs: Alas! that there ſhould be any ſuch in a place of ſuch means and mercies! but it cannot be concealed. Many of them proclaim their ſin like *Sodom*, and carry their deadly Leproſie in their foreheads. I am aſhamed to think that in *Taunton* there ſhould be ſo many Ale-houſe-haunters and Tiplers, ſo many lewd Gameſters, and Rioters and debauched livers; ſo many black mouthed Swearers, who have Oaths and Curſes for their common language, ſo many Raylers at Godlineſs, and Profane Scoffers, ſo many lyars and deceitful Dealers, and unclean and wanton Wretches. O what a long liſt will theſe and ſuch like make up, if put together: it ſaddens me to mention ſuch as theſe. O how crimſen is their guilt! how often

have you been warned, and yet are ſtill unreformed, yea looſe and profane. Yet one warning more have I ſent after you from the Lord to repent. Return, O ſinners, what! will you run into everlaſting burnings with your eyes open?

Repent, O Drunkards, or elſe you ſhall be ſhut out of the Kingdom of Heaven, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10. Repent, O ſwearers, elſe you ſhall fall into condemnation, *James* 5. 12. Repent, O lyars, put away lying, and ſpeak every one truth to his neighbour; elſe you ſhall have your part in the Lake that burneth with fire and brimſtone, *Rev.* 20. 8. Repent, O company-keepers, forſake the fooliſh and live, but a Companion of the wicked ſhall be deſtroyed, *Prov.* 13. 20. Repent you Deceivers of your unrighteous dealings, or elſe you ſhall have no Inheritance in the Kingdom of God, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10. The Lord that made us, knows my earneſt deſire for your converſion and Salvation, and that I ſpeak not this to you out of any evil will toward you, for I will lie at your feet to do you good, but out of a ſenſe of your deplorable eſtate, while you remain in your ſins. I know there is mercy for you if you do ſoundly repent and reform, and bow to the Righteouſneſs and Government of the Lord Chriſt: but if you go on, and ſay, you ſhall yet have peace, I pronounce unto you, that there is no eſcape, but the Lord will make his wrath to ſmoak againſt you, he will wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy ſcalp of ſuch an one as goeth on ſtill in his Treſpaſſes.

Others have eſcaped the groſs pollutions of the world, but ſtick in the form of Godlineſs, and content themſelves with a negative Righteouſneſs, that they are no Drunkards, nor Swearers, *&c.* or at beſt with an outward conformity to the duties of Religion, or ſome common workings, inſtead of a ſaving. O I am jealous for you that you ſhould not loſe the things that you have wrought, and miſs you reward for want of ſincerity: for the Lords ſake put on, and beware of periſhing in the Suburbs of the City of Refuge: beg of God to make through-work with you, and be jealous for your ſelves; get a right underſtanding of the difference between a Hypocrite and a ſincere Chriſtian, and try you eſtates much, but only with thoſe marks, that you are ſure from the Scripture will abide Gods tryal.

But

But for you that fear the Lord in ſincerity, I have nothing but good and comfortable words: I have proclaimed your happineſs in the laſt Token I ſent to the Town: I mean the abſtract for the Covenant of Grace, upon the Priviledges, comforts, mercies there ſummed up, and ſet before you. May your ſouls ever live; what condition can you deviſe wherein there will not be abundance of comfort, and matter of joy unſpeakable, to you. O Beloved, know your own happineſs, and live in that holy admiring, commending, adoring, praiſings of your gracious God, that becomes the people of his praiſe. I have been long, yet methinks I have not emptied half my heart unto you: *I* treſpaſs much, *I* fear, upon the Bearer, therefore in haſte I commend you to God. The good will of him that dwelt in the Buſh be with you all. The Lord Create a defence upon you, and Deliverance for you: the Lord cover you all the day, and make you to dwell between his ſhoulders; I deſire your conſtant, inſtant, earneſt Prayers for me, and reſt,

A willing Labourer, and thankful Sufferer for you,

From the common Goale in Juelcheſter, *July* 4*th.* 1663.

JOS. ALLEINE.

LETTER. V.

[Truſt God, and be ſincere.]

To my moſt endeared Friends, the Servants of Chriſt in Taunton, *Grace and Peace.*

Moſt dearly Beloved and longed for, my Joy and Crown:

MY hearts deſire and prayer to God for you is, that you may be ſaved. I know that you are the But of mens

rage and malice: but you may ſatisfie your ſelves as *David* in his patient ſuſtaining of *Shemei*'s fury and curſes: It may be the Lord will look upon our affliction, and require good for their curſing this day. But however it be for that, be ſure to hold on your way: your name indeed is caſt forth as evil, and you are hated of all men for Chriſts-ſake, for your profeſſion of his Goſpel, and cleaving to his ways and ſervants: but let not this diſcourage you, for you are now more than ever bleſſed: onely hold faſt, that no man take your Crown. Let not any that have begun in the Spirit, end in the fleſh. Do not forſake God, till he forſake you; he that endureth to the end ſhall be ſaved: The Promiſe is to him that overcometh; therefore think not of looking back: Now you have ſet your hands to Chriſt's Pow, though you labour hard, and ſuffer long, the Crop will pay for all: now the Lord is trying what credit he hath in the World, and who they be that will truſt him. The unbelieving World are all for preſent pay; they muſt have ready money, ſomething in hand, and will not follow the Lord when there is like to be any great hazard and hardſhip in his ſervice. But now is the time for you, my Beloved, to prove your ſelves Believers, when there is nothing viſible but preſent hazard and expence, and difficulty in your Makers ſervice. Now it will be ſeen who can truſt the Lord, and who truſts him not: Now, my Brethren, bear you up, ſtand faſt in the Faith, quit you like men, be ſtrong: now give glory to God by believing. If you can truſt in his Promiſes for your reward now, when nothing appears but the diſpleaſure of Rulers, and Bonds, and loſſes, and tribulation on every ſide, this will be ſomewhat like Believers. Brethren, I beſeech you to reckon upon no other but croſſes here. Let none of you dream of an Earthly Paradiſe, or flatter your ſelves with dreams of ſleeping in your eaſe, and temporal Proſperity, and carrying Heaven too. Think not to keep your Eſtates, and liberties and conſciences too: Count not upon reſt till you come to the Land of Promiſe. Not that I would have any of you to run upon hazards uncalled: No, we ſhall meet them ſoon enough in the way of our duty, without we will balk it, and ſhamefully turn aſide: but I would have you caſt overboard your Worldly hopes, and count not upon an earthly

felicity,

felicity, but be content to wait till you come on the other ſide the Grave. Is it not enough to have a whole eternity of happineſs yet behind? If God do throw in the comforts of this life too into the bargain; I would not have you throw them back again, or deſpiſe the goodneſs of the Lord: but I would, my Brethren, that you ſhould uſe this World, as not abuſing it, that you ſhould be crucified to the world, and the world to you; that you ſhould declare plainly that you ſeek a Countrey, a better Countrey, which is an Heavenly. Ah! my dear Brethren, I beſeech you carry it like Pilgrims an ſtrangers, I beſeech you abſtain from fleſhly luſts, which war againſt your Souls; for what have we to do with the cuſtomes and courſes and faſhions of this world, who are ſtrangers in it! Be contented with Travellers lots: know you not that you are in a ſtrange Land? all is well as long as it is well at home; I pray you, Brethren, daily and frequently to conſider your condition and ſtation: do you not remember that you are in an Inn; and what though your be but poorly attended, and meanly accommodated? though you fare hard, and lie hard? Is this a ſtrange thing? what ſhould Travellers look for elſe? will you ſet forth in a Journey, and promiſe your ſelves nothing but fair way and fair weather? Shall a man put forth to Sea and reckon upon nothing but the calm? If you were of the World, the World would love his own. But now God hath choſen you, and called you out of the world, therefore the World hateth you: But remember, my Brethren, it is your duty to love them, even while they hate you; and to pray for mercy for them that will ſhew no mercy, nor do no Juſtice for us. This I deſire you to obſerve as a great duty of the preſent times: And let not any ſo far forget their duty and pattern, as to wiſh evil to them that do evil to us, or to pleaſe themſelves with the thoughts of being even with them. Let us commit our ſelves to him that judgeth righthouſly, and ſhew our ſelves the children of the moſt High, who doth good to his Enemies, and is kind to the unkind and unthankful: And what though they do hate us? Their love and good-will were much more to be feared, than their hatred, and a far worſe ſign. Brethren, keep your ſelves in the love of God; here is Wiſdom. O happy ſouls, that are his Favourites! For

the Lords-ſake look to this, make ſure of ſomething: look to your ſincerity above all things in the World; let not any of you conclude, that becauſe you are of the ſuffering-party, therefore all is well: Look to the Foundation, that your hearts be ſoundly taken off from every ſin, and ſet upon God above as your Bleſſedneſs: Beware that none of you have only a name to love, and be no more than almoſt Chriſtians. For the love of your Souls, make a diligent ſearch, and try upon what ground you ſtand, for it heartily pities me to think that any of you ſhould be in ſo deep, and hazard ſo much as theſe muſt do that will now cleave to the hated ways of the people of God, and yet loſe all at laſt for want of being thorow and ſound in the main work, I mean converſion and Regeneration. None ſo miſerable in all the world as an unſound Profeſſor of Religion now is, for he ſhall be hated and perſecuted of the World, becauſe he takes up a Profeſſion, and yet rejected of God too, becauſe he ſticks in a Profeſſion: but when once you bear the marks of Gods favour, you need not fear the Worlds frowns: Cheer up therefore, Brethren, be ſtrong in the Lord, and of good courage under the Worlds uſage: Fear nor, in our Fathers Houſe there is bread enough, and room enough; this is ſufficient to comfort us under all the inconveniences of the way, that we have ſo happy a Home, ſo worthy a Portion, ſo ready a Father, ſo goodly an Heritage, ſo ſure a Tenure. Oh, comfort one another with theſe words: let God ſee that you can truſt in his Word: let the world ſee that you can live upon a God. I ſhall ſhare my Prayers and loves among you all, and commit you to the Almighty God: the Keeper of Iſrael that never ſlumbereth nor ſleepeth, be your Watchman and Keeper to the end, Farewel. I am

A fervent well-wiſher of your Temporal and Eternal Happineſs,

From the common Goal at Juelcheſter, *July* 24. 1663.

Joſeph Alleine.

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LETTER. VI.

[Look out of your Graves upon the World.]

To my moſt dearly Beloved Friends, the choſen of God in Taunton, *Grace and Peace.*

Moſt endeared Chriſtian,

MY heart is with you, though I am Abſent, as to my Bodily preſence from you, and therefore as I have often already, ſo I have now written to you to ſtir up your pure minds by way of Remembrance, and to call upon you for your ſtedfaſt continuing, and vigorous proceeding in the ways of God. Dear Friends, and fellow Souldiers under Chriſt the Captain of our Salvation, conſider your calling and Station, and approve your ſelves as good Souldiers of Jeſus Chriſt, as men of reſolution and courage, be diſcouraged with no difficulties of your preſent Warfare. As for humane affairs, it would have you to be as you are, *Men of Peace.* I would have you *Armed not for reſiſting*, God forbid, but for *Suffering onely*, as the Apoſtle hints: You ſhould reſiſt, even to the uttermoſt, ſtriving againſt Sin. Here you muſt give no quarter, for if you ſpare but one *Agag*, the life of your Souls muſt go for the life of your ſins: you muſt make no Peace, for God will not ſmile on that Soul that ſmiles on Sin, nor have any Peace with him, that is at peace with his Enemy. Other Enemies you muſt forgive, and love, and pray for (which I again deſire you to mind as one ſpecial duty of the times) but for theſe Spiritual Enemies, all your affections, and all your Prayers muſt be engaged againſt them; yea, you muſt admit no Parley: It's dangerous to diſpute with Temptations. Remember what *Eve* loſt by Parleying with Satan: you muſt flie from Temptations, and put them off at firſt with a Peremptory denial. If you will but hear the Devils Arguments, and the Fleſhes Pleas, and fair Pretences, it is an hundred

to one but you are inſnared by his Sophiſtry. And for this preſent evil World, the Lord deliver you from its Snares. Surely you had need watch and be ſober, and uſe your ſpiritual Weapons dexterouſly and diligently, or elſe this *world* is like to undo you, and deſtroy you. I have often warned you not to build upon an External happineſs, and that you ſhould promiſe your ſelves nothing but hardſhip here: Oh ſtill remember your ſtation; Souldiers muſt not count upon Reſt, and Fulneſs, but Hunger, and Hardneſs. Labour to get right apprehenſions of the World. Do not think theſe things neceſſary; one thing is needful: You may be happy in the want of all outward comforts. Do not think your ſelves undone, if brought to Want or Poverty: ſtudy Eternity, and you will ſee it to be little material to you, whether you are Poor or Rich; and that you may have never ſuch an opportunity for your advantage in all your lives, as when you put all to hazard, and ſeem to run the Veſſel upon the Rocks. Set your enemies one againſt the other: Death againſt the World; no ſuch way to get above the World, as to put your ſelves into the poſſeſſion of Death.

Look often upon your Duſt that you ſhall be reduced to, and imagine you ſaw your bones tumbled out of your Graves, as they are like ſhortly to be, and men handling your Skulls, and enquiring whoſe is this. Tell me of what account will the World be then, what good will it do you: put your ſelves often into your Graves, and look out from thence upon the World, and ſee what Judgement you have of it then. Muſt not you ſhortly be forgot among the Dead? your places will know you no more, and your Memory will be no more among men, and then what will it profit you to have lived in faſhion and repute, and to have been Men of eſteem? one ſerious walk over a Church-yard, *as one ſpeaks*, might make a man mortified to the World. Think upon how many you Tread, but you know them not: no doubt they had their Eſtates, their Friends, their Trades, their buſineſſes, and kept as much ſtir in the World as others do now. But alas, what are they the better for any, for all this? know you not that this muſt be your own caſe very ſhortly: Oh the unhappineſs of deceived man! how

miſe-

miſerably is he bewitched, and befooled, that he ſhould expend himſelf for that which he knows ſhall for ever leave him. Brethren, I beſeech you lay no ſtreſs upon theſe periſhing things, but labour to be at a Holy indifferency about them: Is it for one that is in his wits to ſell his God, his conſcience, his ſoul, for things that he is not ſure to keep a week, nor a day, and which he is ſure after a few ſleepings and wakings more, to leave behind him for ever? go and talk with dying men, and ſee what apprehenſions they have of the World? if any ſhould come to ſuch as theſe, and tell them here is ſuch and ſuch preferments for you, you ſhall have ſuch titles of honour and delights, if you will now diſown Religion, or ſubſcribe to iniquity; do you think ſuch a motion would be embraced? Brethren, why ſhould we not be wiſe in time! why ſhould we not now be of the mind of which we know we ſhall be all ſhortly! woe to them that will not be wiſe till it be to no purpoſe! woe to them whoſe eyes nothing but Death and Judgement, will open! woe to them that though they have been warned by others, and have heard the Worlds greateſt Darlings in Death to cry out of its vanity, worthleſsneſs and deceitfulneſs, and have been told where and how it would leave them; yet would take no warning, but only muſt ſerve themſelves to, for warnings to others. Ah my Beloved, beware there be no worldly Profeſſors among you, that will part rather with their part in Paradiſe, than their part in *Paris*; that will rather part with their Conſciences, than with their Eſtates; that have ſecret reſerves in hearts to ſave themſelves whole, when it comes to the pinch; and not to be of the Religion that will undo them in the World. Beware that none of you have your hearts where your Feet ſhould be, and love your *Mammon* before your Maker. It is time for you to learn with *Paul*, to be Crucified to the World.

But it is time for me to remember that 'tis a Letter, and contain my ſelf within my limits. The God of all Grace, ſtabliſh, ſtrengthen, and ſettle you in theſe ſhaking times, and raiſe your hearts above the fears of the worlds threats, and above the ambition of its favours. My deareſt loves to you all, with my fervent deſire of your Prayers. May the Lord of Hoſts

Hosts be with you, and the God of *Jacob* your refuge. Farewell my dear Brethren, Farewel, and be strong in the Lord, I am

Yours to serve you in the Gospel, whether by Doing or Suffering.

From the common Gaole at Juelchester, *June* 31. 1663.

JOS. ALLEINE.

LETTER VII.

[First, Christian Marks: 2. Duties.]

To the Beloved, my most endearing, and endeared Friends, the Flock of Christ in Taunton, *Salvation.*

Most dearly Beloved and longed for, my Joy and Crown:

I Must say of you as *David* did of *Jonathan*, Very pleasant have you been unto me, and your love to me is wonderful. And as I have formerly taken great content in that my Lot was cast among you, so through grace I rejoyce in my present Lot, that I am called to approve my love to you by suffering for you; for you, I say: for you know that I have not sought yours but you; and that for doing my duty to your souls, I am here in these Bonds, which I do cheerfully accept through the grace of God that strengtheneth me. Oh! that your Souls might be quickened and enlarged by these my Bonds! that your hands might be strengthened, and your hearts encouraged in the Lord your God by our sufferings! See to it, my dearly Beloved, that you stand fast in the power of the Holy Doctrine which we have Preached from the Pulpit; preached at the Bar; preached from

from the Priſon to you: It is a Goſpel worth the ſuffering for: ſee that you follow after holineſs, without which no man ſhall ſee God: Oh! the madneſs of the blind World, that they ſhould put from them the only Plank upon which they can ſcape to Heaven. Surely the Enemies of Holineſs are their own Enemies. Alas for them! they know not what they do. What would not theſe fooliſh Virgins do at laſt, when it is too late for a little of the Oyl of the wiſe; Oh, for one dram of that Grace which they have ſcorned and deſpiſed. But let not any of you, my dear People, be wiſe too late: Look diligently leſt any man fail of the Grace of God. Beware that none of you be cheated through the ſubtlety of Saran and deceitfulneſs of your hearts with counterfeit grace. There is never a grace but hath its counterfeit: and there is nothing in all the World that is more common or more eaſie, than to miſtake common and counterfeit Grace for true and ſaving: and remember you are undone for evermore, if you ſhould die in ſuch a miſtake: Not that I would ſhake the confidence of any ſound Believer, who upon often and through ſearce into the Scripture and his own heart, and putting himſelf upon Gods tryal, hath gotten good evidence that his Graces are of the right kind: Build your confidenee ſure: See that you get the knowledge of the certain and infallible marks of Salvation, and make ſure by great obſerving your own hearts that theſe marks be in you, and then you cannot be too confident. But as you love your ſouls take heed of a groundleſs confidence. Take heed of being confident before you have tried. Dear Brethren, I would fain have you all ſecured againſt the day of Judgement; I would that the ſtate of your ſouls were all well ſetled: Oh how comfortably might you think of any troubles, if you were but ſure of your pardons! Were your Salvation out of doubt, no matter though other things were in hazard. I beſeech you, whatever you neglect, look to this: I am afraid there are among you that have not made your peace with God yet; that are not yet acquainted with that great work of Converſion: ſuch I would warn and charge before the living God to ſpeed into Chriſt, and without any more diſputes or delayes to put away their iniquities, and to come in and deliver up themſelves to Jeſus Chriſt, that they

they may be ſaved. It is not your Profeſſion, nor performing external duties, nor partaking of external Priviledges that will ſave you: No, no, you muſt be converted or condemned. It is not enough that you have ſome love and liking to Gods ways and people, and are willing to venture ſomething for them; all this will not prove you ſound Chriſtians: have your hearts been changed? have you been ſoundly convinced of your ſins? of your damnable and undone condition in your ſelves? and your utter inability to lick your ſelves whole again by your own duties? have you been brought at leaſt to ſuch a ſight and ſenſe of ſin, as that there is no ſin, though agreeable to your conſtitution, though a ſupport to your gain but you do heartily abhor it, and utterly diſallow of it? are you brought to ſuch a ſenſe of the beauty of holineſs, and of the Laws and ways of God, as that you do deſire to know the whole mind of God, and would not excuſe your ſelves by ignorance from any duty, and that you do not allow your ſelves in the ordinary neglect of any thing that conſcience charges upon you as a duty? are your very hearts ſet upon the glorifying and enjoying of God, as your greateſt happineſs, which you deſire more than Corn and Wine, and Oyl? had you rather be the holieſt than the richeſt and greateſt in the world? and is your greateſt delight (ordinarily, and when you are your ſelves) in the thoughts of God, and in your converſings with God in Holy Exerciſes? Is Chriſt more precious than all the world to you? and are you willing upon the through conſideration of the ſtrictneſs and holineſs, and ſelf-denying nature of his Laws, yet to take them all for the rule of your thoughts, words, and actions? and though Religion may be dear, do you reſolve if God will aſſiſt you by his Grace, to go through with it, let the coſt be what it will? happy the man that is in ſuch a caſe. This is a Chriſtian indeed, and whatever you be and do ſhort of this, all is unſound. But you that bear in your ſouls the marks of the Lord Jeſus above mentioned, upon you I ſhould lay no other burden, but to hold faſt, and make good your ground and to preſs forward towards the mark. Thankfully acknowledge the diſtinguiſhing grace God to your ſouls: and live rejoycingly in the hopes of the glory of God, the hopes that ſhall never make you aſhamed: live daily in the praiſes of your

your Redeemer : be much in admiring God, and ſtudy the worthineſs, excellency, and glory of his Attributes : let your ſouls be much taken up in contemplating and commending his glorious perfection, and bleſſing your ſelves in the goodly portion you have in him : live like thoſe that have a God, and then be diſconſolate if you can : If there be not more in an infinite God to comfort you, than in a Priſon, or poverty, or other affliction to deject you, our Preaching is vain, and your Faith is vain. Let the thoughts of God be your daily repaſt : and never be ſatisfied till your hearts run out as freely, naturally, conſtantly, unweariedly after God, as others do after the World : a little force upon your hearts for a while to turn them into this holy Channel, may quickly come ſo to habituate your minds to holineſs, that they may naturally run that way. But it is time to ſhut up : Farewel; my dear Brethren, the Lord God Almighty be a protection to you, and your exceeding great reward : Farewel in the Lord I am

Yours in the Bowels of the Lord Jeſus,

JOS. ALLEINE

From the common Goale at Juelcheſter, *Sept.* 11. 1663.

Juſt now I received your melting Letter, to which I am not able now to return an anſwer, but ſhall with ſpeed; your very great affections for me cannot but move me, and make me ready to repeat again the firſt words of my letter above. The Lord inable me to return ſomething to you for your great loves; I am ſenſible I have come very ſhort of my duty to you : but I muſt needs tell you, my Bowels are moved with your loves, which I hope I ſhall greatly prize : once more Farewel.

My dear Brother *Norman* remembers you with much love, deſiring that you may be blameleſs and harmleſs, the Sons of God without rebuke in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe Nation, among whom ye ſhould ſhine as lights in the World.

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LETTER VIII.

[How to ſhew love to Miniſters, and live joyfully.]

To the moſt Loving and dearly Beloved, my Chriſtian Friends in Taunton, *Grace, Mercy, and Peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

Moſt endeared Brethren,

I Have received your moving melting letter, and could not look over *ſuch* tender expreſſions of your working affections, without ſome commotions in my own: I may confidently ſay, I ſpent more Tears upon thoſe lines, than ever you did Ink: your deep ſenſe of my labours in the Miniſtry, I cannot but thankfully acknowledge, and take notice of: yet withal, heartily and unfeingedly confeſſing, that all was but the duty which I did owe to your precious and immortal Souls: which God knows, are very much ſhort of my duty. The omiſſions, imperfections, defects, deadneſs, that accompanied my duties I do own, I muſt and will own; and the Lord humble me for them. But all that was of God (and that was all that was good) be ſure that you give to God alone. To him I humbly aſcribe both the Will, and the Deed, to whom alone be Glory for ever.

My dear Brethren, my buſineſs as I have often told you, is not to gain your hearts, or turn your eyes towards me, but to Jeſus Chriſt: his Spokeſman I am, will you give your hearts to him? will you give your hands, your names to him? will you ſubſcribe to his Laws, and conſent to his Offices, and be at through defiance with all his Enemies? This do, and I have my Errant. Who will follow Chriſts Colours? who will come under his Banner? this ſhall be the man that ſhall be my Friend; this is he that will oblige me for ever. Do theſe Letters come to none that are yet unſanctified? to no looſe ſinner? to no ignorant ſinner? to no unſound profeſſor? Oh that there were none ſuch indeed! oh that I had left no ſuch behind me! but would they do me a kindneſs as I be-

I believe they would, oh then let them come away to Jeſus Chriſt at this call! lie no longer O ſinner, in thy ſwill, be no more in love with darkneſs! ſtick no longer in the skirts and outſide of Religion, demure no longer, diſpute not, and waver no more, halt no further, but ſtrike in throughly with Jeſus Chriſt, except nothing, reſerve nothing, but come off throughly to the Lord, and follow him fully. And then happy man that thou ſhalt be, for thou will be made for ever; and joyful man that I ſhall be, for I ſhall ſave a Soul from death. The earneſt and pittiful beggings of a poor Priſoner, do uſe to move ſome Bowels: hear O Friends, will you do nothing for a Miniſter of Chriſt? Nothing for a Priſoner of Jeſus Chriſt? methinks I hear you anſwer, [yea, rather what will we not do, he ſhall never want while we have it; he ſhall need no office of Love, but we will run and ride to do it.] Yea, but this is not that I beg of you; will you gratifie me indeed? then come in, kiſs the Son, bow to the Name of Jeſus; not in a Complement, with Cap and Knee, but let your Souls bow, let all your Powers bend Sail, and do him homage. Let that Sacred Name be Graven into the ſubſtance of your hearts, and lie as a bundle of Mirth between your Breaſts. Let me freely ſpeak for him, for he is worthy for whom you ſhall do this thing; worthy to be beloved of you; worthy to have your very hearts, worthy to be admired, adored, praiſed, ſerved, glorified to the uttermoſt by you, and every Creature; worthy for whom you ſhould lay down all, leave all: Can any thing be too much for him? can any thing be too good for him? Or too great for him? come give up all, Reſign all, lay it at the Feet of Chriſt Jeſus, offer all as a Sacrifice to him, ſee that you be univerſally the Lords; keep nothing from him: I know through the goodneſs of God, that with many of you this work is not yet to do: but this ſet ſolemn reſignation to the Lord is to be done more than once; and to be followed with an anſwerable practice when it is done: See that you walk worthy of the Lord? but how? in the *fear of the Lord*, and in the *comfort of the Holy Ghoſt*; let theſe two go together. So ſhall you adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour: and experience, the Heavenly felicity of a Chriſtians life: While

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Holineſs is made the But of others Perſecution, do you make it the white, the *mark* of your proſecution; that you *live it* up, as much as others *cry it down*. O watch and keep your Garments about you; the plain, but comely clothing of humility, the ſeamleſs Coat of Chriſtian unity, the ſtrait and cloſe Garment of ſtrictneſs, mortification and ſelf-denial, the warm Winter-garment of love and charity, this Garment will keep you warm in the Winter: love will not be quenched by the Waters, nor cooled by the nipping Froſts of perſecution and oppoſition. Cleave faſt to Chriſt, never let go your hold; cling the faſter, becauſe ſo many are labouring to knock off your fingers, and looſed your hold. Hold faſt your Profeſſion, hold faſt your Integrity, hold faſt the beginning of your confidence ſtedfaſt to the end: If you do but keep your hold, and make good your ground, and keep your way; all that the World can do, and all that the powers of darkneſs can do, can never do you harm. Keep your own Vinyard with conſtant care and watchfulneſs, and be ſure that there be no Inroad made upon your conſciences, that the Enemy do not get between you and home, between your ſouls and God; and then let who or what will aſſail you without, you need not fear: let this be your daily exerciſe, to keep your conſciences void of offence: keep fair weather at home, however it be abroad. But I would not only that you ſhould walk *holily*, but that you ſhould walk *comfortably*: But I need ſay the leſs to this, becauſe the fear of the Lord, and the comfort of the Holy Ghoſt, do lie together. Oh the proviſion God hath made for your continual joy and comfort: dear Brethren, do but underſtand your own bleſſedneſs, happy men that you are, if you did but know and conſider it; who would count himſelf poor and miſerable that hath all the fulneſs of the Godhead for his: ſound in this deep: can you find any bottom? take the heighth of the Divine Perfections if you can, till then you cannot tell your own felicity. Take a ſervey of Immenſity, tell me the longitude or latitude of infinite goodneſs and mercy, of the Eternal Diety: if you can do this, you may gueſs at your own happineſs. Oh Chriſtians! live like your ſelves, live worthy of your Portion, of your Priviledge, and your glorious prerogatives. I am in haſte, and it is time for me

me to end; however, that you may walk worthy of your glorious hopes, and may live answerably to the mercies you have received from above, is the great desire of

Your Souls fervent well-wisher in the bonds of affliction and tribulation.

From the Prison at Juelchester,
September 18. 1663.

JOS. ALLEINE.

LETTER. IX.

[Easie Sufferings.]

To the most Loving and Beloved, my Christian Friends at Taunton, *Salvation.*

DEarly Beloved and longed for, my Joy and Crown, for whom I am an Embassadour in Bonds: what thanks to render to God in your behalf, I know not, for your fervent charity towards me, and all the servants of my Lord, for all your labours of love, for all your diligence, and boldness, and resolution, in owning the despised way, and hated servants of the Lord Jesus, in an evil day. The Lord is not unrighteous to forget this: Is not this upon record with him, and sealed up among his Treasures? surely the Lord will have mercy upon *Taunton:* I have no doubt but that the God of your Mercies hath yet a choice blessing in store for you; be not weakned by my Bonds. Glory be to God in the Highest, that he hath accounted me worthy not only to Preach the Gospel to you, but also to confirm it by the parting with my much valued liberty, so dear a People, so sweet Relations, comforts, conveniencies, which I enjoyed in all abundance when I was with you. When I look back upon all the circumstances of the late Providence, I must say as they of Christ upon his Miracles, *He hath done all things well*; it is all as I would have it, I am fully satisfied in my Fathers good pleasure.

Verily there is no little honour and happineſs, no little peace and priviledge in theſe Bonds. Verily all is true that I have told you of the All-ſufficiency of God, of the fulneſs of Chriſt, of the ſatisfactorineſs of the promiſes of the peace, tranquility, content, and ſecurity, that is to be had in a life of Faith. Surely methinks I ſhould be content to ſeal to theſe things at a much dearer rate than this; but my gracious Father will not put me to the hardeſt Leſſon at firſt: oh what reaſon have I to ſpeak good of his name! what elſe ſhould I do all my days, but love, and fear, and preach, and praiſe, ſo good a God? when I look back upon the gentle dealings of God with me, I often think he hath brought me up as indulgently as *David* did *Adonijah*, of whom it is ſaid, *His Father had not diſpleaſed him.* I have received nothing but good at the hands of the Lord all my days; and now he doth begin to afflict, I ſee ſo much Mercy in this very Gaol, that I muſt be more thankful for this than for my proſperity. Surely the name of the place is, *The Lord is here:* Surely it may be called *Peniel.* Be ſtrong in the Lord, my Brethren, be patient, ſtabliſh your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draws nigh. In nothing be terrified by your adverſaries. Now let thoſe that fear the Lord be often ſpeaking one to another. I hear that Satan is practiſing to ſend more of you after me: I deſire and pray for your liberty: but if any of you be forced hither for the teſtimony of the Goſpel, I ſhall embrace you with both arms Fare you well, my moſt dearly Beloved: be perfect, and be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of Love and Peace ſhall be with you. My Brethren in Bonds ſalute you with much affection, rejoycing to behold your order and the ſtedfaſtneſs of your Faith in Chriſt: ſhare my heart among you, and know that I am

The willing Servant of your Faith and Joy,

JOS. ALLEINE.

From the common Gaole at Juelcheſter, Sept. 28. 1663.

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LETTER. X.

[The Love of Christ.]

To my Beloved in the Lord, the Flock of Christ in Taunton, *Grace and Peace.*

Most Loving and best Beloved,

MY heart is with you, my affections are espoused to you. And methinks I could even say with the Apostle, (*you are in my heart, to live and die with you*:) and who can but love where they have received so much love (and continually do) as I have from you! the Lord requite your love which is great (and if compared with his, but little) with his which is infinite; this is a love worthy of your ambition, worthy of your adoration and admiration. This is the Womb that bore you from eternity, and out of which have burst forth all the Mercies, Spiritual and Temporal, that you enjoy. This was the love that chose you, when less Offenders, and those that being converted, might have been a hundred fold more serviceable to their Makers Glory, are left to perish in their sins: May your souls be filled with the sense of this love. But it may be you will say, how shall I know if I am an object of Electing love? least an unbelieving thought should damp your joy; know in short, that if you have chosen God, he hath certainly chosen you. Have you taken him for your blessedness? and do you more highly prize, and more diligently seek after conformity to him, and the fruition of him than any, than all the goods of this World? If so, then away with doubts, for you could not have loved, and have chosen him, unless he had loved you first. Now may my Beloved dwell continually in the thoughts, the views, the tastes of the love. Get you down under its shadows, and taste its pleasant fruits. Oh the Provisions that love hath made for you, before the Foundation of the World! Ah silly dust, that ever thou shouldest be thought upon so long before thou wast: that the contrivances of the infinite Wisdom, should be taken up about thee! that such a Crawling thing, such a

Mite, a Flea, ſhould have the conſultations of the Eternal Diety exerciſed about thee! verily his love to thee is wonderful. Lord what is man! thou telleſt us he is *Duſt and Vanity, a worm, nothing leſs than nothing*; how then doſt thou love him! oh wonderful! be aſtoniſhed yea Heavens at this: be moved ye ſtrong foundation of the Earth. Fall down ye Elders, ſtrike up ye Heavenly Quires, and ſing yet again, *Glory to God in the higheſt*: for all *our* ſtrings would crack to reach the Notes of love, praiſe, and admiration that this love doth call for. Oh that ever emptineſs and vanity, ſhould be thus prized! that *Jehovah* ſhould make account of ſo worthleſs, ſo uſeleſs a thing as man! that ever baſeneſs ſhould be thus preferred! that ever nothing ſhould be thus dignified! that ever rottenneſs ſhould be thus advanced, a Clod, a ſhaddow, Potſheard, ſhould be thus glorified! Oh Brethren, ſtudy, beſeech you, not to require or retaliate (there's impoſſibility, and blaſphemy in ſuch a thought) but to admire and imitate his love. Let love conſtrain you, let love put you upon doing, and prepare you for ſuffering; forget not a love ſo memorable, undervalue not a love ſo unvaluable; I would have you all the captives of love: may the cords of love draw you towards, and knit you to your Redeemer: may the divided ſtreams be united in him. Alas, that our ſouls are ſo narrow, that the Waters are ſo ſhallow with us!: how little how very little would our love be, if he had it all, infinitely leſs than the Glow-worm to the Sun, or the Attome to the Univerſe? and have we any of this little to ſpare for him oh that we might love him with our little All! that all our little powers were ingaged for him! Brethren, here is no excees: oh love the Lord ye his Saints! he is worthy for whom you ſhall do this. Do but think what love hath done for you and think if you can, what it means to do for you. This is the love that yarned upon you, when in your Blood no eye pitying you. This is the love that took you up when you were robbed and wounded, and left for dead, and poured in Wine and Oyl into your wounds. This is that love that reprieved and ſpared, and pardoned, when the Law had condemned you, and Juſtice would have had you delivered up; and your Self-condemning conſciences gave up all for loſt, concluding there was no hope. This is the love, the expenſive

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love that bought you from the power of darkneſs, from the eternal burnings, the devouring fire in which you muſt otherwiſe have dwelt. Do you not remember how you were hungry, and it fed you, naked and it cloathed you, ſtrangers and it took you in, ſick and it viſited you, in Priſon and it came unto you? you were dead and are alive, you were loſt and are found. And me thinks I ſee how love runs to meet you, and falls upon your necks, and kiſſeth the Lips that deſerve to be loathed, and rejoyces over you, and makes a Feſtival, and as it were a Holiday in Heaven to you, inviting Angels to rejoyce. And if the friends do rejoyce, how much more doth the father? for ſaith he, *Theſe my Sons were dead and are alive, were loſt and are found.* Oh melting love! ah Brethren, how ſtrange is this, that our recovery ſhould be Heavens triumph, the joy of God and Angels. That this love ſhould feaſt us, and feaſt over us, and our Birth-day ſhould be kept in Heaven: that this ſhould be the round at Heavens Table, and the burden of the Song above: [*For this my Son was dead, and is alive,*] and well, what remains but that you ſhould be another manner of People, than ever yet you have been, more holy, more humble, more even, more reſolved, more lively, more active? where is your Zeal for the Lord of Hoſts? will ſlender returns ſuffice you in anſwer to ſuch a love? God forbid. But neceſſity calls me off from going any further. May the love that choſe you, and redeemed you, for ever dwell in you, and overſhaddow you, and bear you ſafe to the Kingdom. In the Holy Arms of Divine Love I deſire to leave you. May you live under its daily Influences, and be melted and overcome with its warming Beams, with its quickning, piercing, powerful Rays. My moſt dear love, to you all. See that you live not in a dull, fruitleſs, liveleſs courſe. Be patient, be watchful, inſtant in Prayer, fervent in Spirit, ſerving the Lord: I am very healthful and chearful through grace. See that none of theſe things move you that befal us. Fare you well my dear Brethren, farewel in the Lord, I am

Yours in the ſtrongeſt Bonds of Affection, and Affliction.

From the Priſon at Juelcheſter,
October 25. 1663.

Joſeph Alleine.

LET-

LETTER XI.

[Remember Christ Crucified, and crucifie Sin.]

To the Faithful and Well-beloved People, the servants of Christ in Taunton, *Salvation.*

Most dear Christians,

I Am by Office a Remembrancer, the Lords Remembrancer for you and your Remembrancer in the behalf of Christ. My business is, with the Apostle, to stir up your pure minds by way of Remembrance. And what or whom should I remember you of, but your mindful Friend, your Intercessour with the Father, who hath you always in remembrance, appearing in the presence of God for you? May his memory ever live in our hearts, though mine should die: Oh remember his Love more than Wine, remember in what a case he found you, and yet nothing could anihilate his heart, nor divert the purpose of his Love from you: He loathed not your Rags nor your Rottenness: he found you in a loathsome vomit and filthiness, in a nasty and verminous ratters, (think not these expressions too odious: no Pen can describe, no heart can imagine the odiousness of sin in his sight, in which you lay and rolled your selves as the filthy Swine in the mire) yet he pitied you, his Bowels were moved, and his Compassions were kindled, when one would have thought his wrath should have boiled and his indignation have burned down to Hell against you: he loathed not but loved you, and washed you from your sins in his own Blood: Ah monstrous and polluted Captives? ah vile and putrid Carkases? that ever the holy Jesus should take the hands of you, and shou'd his own self wash you, and wrinse you! methinks I see him weeping over you; and yet it was a more costly Bath by which he cleansed you. Ah Sinners! look upon the streaming Blood flowing out warm from his blessed Body, to fetch out the ingrained filthiness that you by

by ſin had contracted. Alas! what a horrid filthineſs in ſin, that nothing but the blood of the Covenant could waſh away! and what a love is Chriſts, than when no Sope nor Nitre could ſuffice to cleanſe us, when a whole Ocean could not waſh nor purifie us, would open every vein of his heart to do the work! look upon your crucified Lord: do you not ſee a ſacred ſtream flowing out of every Member? ah, how thoſe holy hands, thoſe unerring Feet do run a ſtream to purge us! Alas, how that innocent Back doth bleed with cruel ſcourgings to ſave ours! how the great drops of blood fall to the ground from his ſacred Face in his miraculous ſweat, in his bitter and bloody Agony, to waſh and beautifie ours! how his wounded hearts and ſide twice pierced, firſt with love and pity; and then with Souldiers cruelty do pour out their healthful and ſaving Flouds upon us? Lord, how do we make a ſhift to forget ſuch a love as this? ah mirrors or rather monſters of ingratitude, that can be unmindful of ſuch a Friend: do we thus requite him: is this our kindneſs to ſuch an obliging friend! Chriſtians, where are you affections? to what uſe do you put your faculties? what have you memories for: but to remember him! what have you the power of loving for, but that you ſhould love him? wherefore ſerves joy or deſire, but to long for him and delightfully to embrace him? may your ſouls and all their Powers be taken up with him: may all the little doors of your ſouls be ſet open to him. Here fix your thoughts, here terminate your deſire; here you may light your Candle and kindle your fire when almoſt out. Rub and chafe your hearts well with the deep conſideration of the love of Chriſt, and it is a wonder if they do not get ſome warmth. The Lord ſhed abroad his love in your hearts by the H. Ghoſt: Oh, that this love might conſtrain you! Brethren what will you do now for Jeſus Chriſt. Have you never a Sacrifice to lay upon his Altar? come, and I will ſhew you what you ſhall do, let your hands be in the blood of your ſins, fall foul with them, ſearch them out with diligence, ſearch your hearts and your houſes; whatever iniquities you find there, out with them, put them far from your Tabernacles; if you crucifie them not, you are not Jeſus his Friends. God forbid

bid that there ſhould be a lying Tongue, or any way of deceit in your Shops. That his ſervice ſhould give place to the World in your Families. Far be it from any of you, my Brethren, that you ſhould be careful to teach your children and ſervants the way of your Trades and Callings, and neglect to inſtruct them in the way of Life. Is weekly Catechiſing up in every one of your Families? The Lord convince any of you that may be guilty of this neglect: Oh, ſet up God in your Houſes; and ſee that you be not ſlovenly in Cloſet performances: beware of ſerving the Lord negligently; ſerve not the Lord with that which coſt you nothing: look to it that you content not your ſelves with a cheap and eaſie Religion. Put your fleſh to it: be well aſſured that the Religion that coſts you nothing will yeeld you nothing: keep up the life of Religion in your Family and Cloſet duties. Fear nothing like a cuſtomary and careleſs performance of Gods ſervice. Judge your own ſelves whether lazie wiſhes, idie complaints, and yawning Prayers are like to carry you through the mighty difficulties that you muſt get through if ever you come to Heaven. When you find your ſelves going on in a liftleſs, liveleſs, heartleſs courſe, and have no mind to your work, ask your ſelves, is this to take the Kingdom of Heaven by violence, or can I hope to win it without? ſee that you ſacrifice your ſelves to the Lord, that you deliver up your ſelves to him, that now you live to Chriſt himſelf. As Chriſt hath made over his life and death to you, ſo let it be your care to live and die to him: labour to forget your ſelves and look upon all your enjoyments as Chriſts goods; upon your time, parts, ſtrength, as his Talents: look upon your ſelves onely in the quality of Servants and Stewards that are to husband all theſe for your Lords advantage, and as thoſe that muſt give an account. And pray for me that I may take the Counſel that I give. I bleſs the Lord, I want nothing but the opportunity of being ſerviceable unto you, and to enjoy you: but I hope the Lord will make my bonds for you to be uſeful to your edification; that is the White I aim at, if I may glorifie God, and ſerve your Souls beſt by being here, I ſhall never wiſh to come out, though I confeſs liberty of its ſelf is very precious.

Finally,

Finally, Brethren, Farewel: be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of Love and Peace ſhall be with you, I

The ready Servant of your Faith and Joy,

JOS. ALLEINE.

From the Priſon at Juelcheſter, *Octob.* 14. 1663.

My dear Brother *Norman* ſalutes you tenderly, deſiring you to be patient, to ſtabliſh your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

LETTER XII.

[For daily Self-Examination.]

To the moſt Beloved People, the Flock of Chriſt in Taunton, *Salvation.*

Moſt dear Brethren:

I Would my time were as long as my heart, that I might open my ſelf to you; but I was not without ſome diſcontent diverted, when I was ſetting my ſelf to have Written at large to you. Now I am pinched, however I could not leave my dear charge altogether unviſited, but muſt needs ſalute you in a few Lines. Brethren, how ſtands it with you? doth the main work go on? do your ſouls proſper? This is my care, beware that you Flag not, that you faint not now in the evil day. I underſtand that your dangers grow upon you, may your Faith and courage and reſolution grow accordingly, and much more abundantly to overtop them. Some of your enemies I hear are in great hopes to ſatisfie their luſts upon you: well, be not diſcouraged my dear Brethren,

thren, but bleſs the Lord who of his abundant Mercy, hath ſo remarkably preſerved you ſo long beyond all expectation. Let it not be a ſtrange thing to you, if the Lord do now call you to ſome difficulty: forſake not the Aſſembling of your ſelves together, as the manner of ſome is. I plainly ſee the Coal of Religion will ſoon go out, unleſs it have ſome better helps to cheriſh it, then a Carnal Miniſtrie, and lifeleſs Adminiſtration. Dear Brethren, now is the time for you that fear the Lord, to ſpeak often one to another: manage your duties with what prudence you can, but away with that Carnal prudence, that will decline duty to avoid danger. Is the Communion of Saints worth the venturing for? Shut not up your doors againſt Godly Meetings. I am told that it is become a hard matter, when a Miniſter is willing to take pains with you to get place: Far be this from you my Brethren. What, ſhut out the Word! ſuppoſe there be ſomewhat more danger to him that gives the Miniſter entertainment? Is there not much more advantage accordingly? did not *Obed Edom*, and his Houſe get the bleſſing by entertaining the Ark there? or do you think God hath never a bleſſing for thoſe that ſhall with much Self-denial entertain his Meſſengers, his Saints, his Worſhip? are you believers, and yet are affraid you ſhall be looſers by Chriſt? do you indeed not know that he that runs moſt hazard for Chriſt, doth expreſs moſt love to Chriſt, and ſhall receive the greateſt reward; away with that unbelief, that prefers the preſent ſafety, before the future glory.

I left you ſome helps for daily Examination, I am jealous leaſt you ſhould grow ſlack, and ſlight, and careleſs in that duty. Let me ask you in the name of the Lord, doth never a day paſs you, but you do ſolemnly and ſeriouſly call your ſelves to an account, what your carriage hath been to God and Men? ſpeak conſcience, Is there never an one within the hearing of this Letter, that is a neglecter of this duty? doth every one of your Conſciences acquit you? Oh that they did! oh that they could! tell me, would not ſome of you be put ſhrewdly to it, if I ſhould ask you when you read or thought over the queſtions that were given you for your help? and would you not be put to a bluſh, to give me an anſwer? and will you not be much more aſhamed, that God

and

and conſcience ſhould find you tardy? not that I would neceſſarily bind you up to that very Method, only till you have found a way more profitable: I would deſire you, yea, methinks I cannot but deeply charge you, to make daily uſe of that. Awake conſcience, and do thou fall upon that Soul that thou findeſt careleſs in this work, and never let him be at reſt till thou canſt witneſs for him, that he is a *daily and ſtrict obſerver of himſelf*, and doth live in the conſtant practice of this duty. What ſhall neither Gods charge, nor your promiſe, nor profit hold you to your work? yet I may not doubt, but ſome of you do daily perform this duty. The Lord incourage you in it: yet give me leave to ask you what you have gained? are you grown more univerſally conſciencious, more ſtrict, more humble, and more ſenſible of your many and great defects, then you were before? If ſo, bleſſed are you of the Lord; if otherwiſe, this duty hath been performed but ſlightly by you. What can you ſay to this queſtion? doth your care of your ways abate, or doth it increaſe, by the conſtant uſe of this duty? If it abate, remember from whence you are fallen, and repent; as good not do it at all, as not to the purpoſe.

My Pen is apt to run, when I am writing unto you. I beſeech you, that my Letters may not be as ſo much waſte Paper to you; may they be provocations to your duty, and Medicines to any corruptions that they meet with; Oh that they might find out mens ſins, and excite their graces! I have run much farther than I thought I ſhould have done, but now I am called upon, and muſt ſhut up. The Lord God be a Sun and a Shield to you. My moſt dear Love to you all, fare you well in the Lord, I am

Your Embaſſador in Bonds,

JOS. ALLEINE.

From the common Goal at Juelcheſter, Octob. 20. 1668.

LET-

LETTER XIII.

[Motives and Marks of Growth.]

To the most Loving, and best Beloved, the servants of Christ in Taunton, *Grace and Peace:*

Most dear and tender Friends,

WHose I am, and whom under God I desire to serve; to build you up in Holiness, and comforts hath been through grace my great ambition. This is that which I laboured for; this is that which I suffer for: and in short the end of all my applications to you, and to God for you. How do your souls prosper? are they in a thriving case? what progress do you make in Sanctification? doth the House of *Saul* grew weaker and weaker, and the house of *David* stronger and stronger? beloved, I desire to be jealous of you with a Godly jealousie, lest any of you should lose your ground in these declining times: and therefore cannot but be often calling upon you to look to your standing, and to watch and hold fast, that no man take your Crown. Ah! how surely shall you reap in the end if you faint not! take heed therefore that you lose not the things you have wrought, but as you have begun well, so go on in the strength of Christ, and give diligence to the full assurance of hope to the end, 'tis your thriving, I tell you, I drive at.

Do you need Motives?] 1. *How much are you behind-hand?* Oh, the fair advantages that we have lost! what time, what Sabboths, Sermons, Sacraments, are upon the matter lost? how much work have we yet to do? are you sure of Heaven yet? are you fit to die yet? surely they that are in so much Poverty, under so many great wants, had need to set upon some more thriving courses.

Secondly, *Consider what others have gained, whilst we it may be sit down by the loss:* Have we not met many Vessels richly laden, while our Souls are empty? Oh, the rich Booties, the golden Prizes that some have won? while we have folded

folded the hands to ſleep! have not many of our own ſtanding in Religion left us far behind them?

Thirdly, *Conſider what a ſpending time there is coming*: Affliction and Tribulation ſeem to be not far from you: had you not need to be well ſtocked againſt ſuch a day? go to the *Ant* thou ſluggard, ſhe layeth up her meat in the Summer. Happy man that can ſay to his Soul on good grounds, what he vainly ſpake, *Thou haſt much good laid up for many years*: Who will not Victual the Caſtle againſt the Siege? and the Ship againſt the Voyage?

Fourthly, *Conſider you will find all little enough when you come to die*: the Wiſe among the Virgins have no Oyl to ſpare at the coming of the Bridegroom; diſtreſs and temptations, and death will put all your Graces to it. How much ado have many poor Saints had at laſt to put into this harbour? *David* cries for reſpite till he had recovered a little more ſtrength.

Fifthly, *Conſider how little it will avail you to thrive in your Eſtates, and not thrive in your Souls*: Poor *Gehazi!* what did he get by it when he gained *Naamans* Talents, and came off with his Leproſie?

Sixthly, *Conſider how ſhort your time for gathering in probability is*: the Iſraelites gathered twice ſo much Manna againſt the Sabboth as they did at other times, becauſe at that time there was no Manna fell. Brethren you know not how long you have to lay in for.

Seventhly, *Conſider Gods expectations are great from you*: he hath been lopping and pruning you, and now he looks for *more fruit*: he hath had you for ſome time under his more ſeverer Diſcipline, and therefore expects you ſhould be better proficients: he hath tried new means with you, and is come to you with a Rod; and he will be angry with a witneſs if he do not find you now to mend. Times of Afflictions uſe to be gaining times to Gods People; God forbid that you alone ſhould be loſers.

Do you ask for marks how you may know your ſouls to be in a thriving caſe?

Firſt, *If your appetites be more ſtrong*. Do you thirſt after God, and after grace, more than heretofore? do your cares for and deſire after the World abate? and do you hunger

and

and thirſt after righteouſneſs! whereas you were wont to come with an ill-will to holy duties, do you come to them as a hungrie ſtomach to its meats?

Secondly, If your Pulſes beat more even. Are you ſtill off and on, hot and cold. Or is the a more even ſpun thred of holineſs through your whole courſe? do you make good the ground from which you were formerly often beaten off?

Thirdly, If your natural heat do grow more vigorous, and your digeſtion more quick. Do you take more notice of God in every thing, than heretofore? and let none of his works, nor words paſs without ſome careful attention, and obſervation? do you ponder upon, and pray over his Word, and his Providences?

Fourthly, If you do look more to the Compaſs, and latitude of Religion, and mind more than ever, the carrying on together the duties of both Tables. Do you not only look to the keeping if your own Vineyards, but do you begin to look more abroad, and to lay out your ſelves for the good of others, and are filled with zealous deſires for their converſation, and ſalvation? do you manage your talk and your Trade, by the rules of Religion?

Do you eat and ſleep by rule? doth Religion form, and mould, and direct your carriage towards Husband, Wife, Parents, Children, Maſters, Servants! do you grow more univerſally conſciencious? Is piety more diffuſive than ever with you, doth it come more abroad with you, out of your Cloſſets into your Houſes, your Shops, your Fields? doth it journey with you, and buy and ſell for you? hath it the caſting voice in all you do?

Fifthly, If the duties of Religion be more eaſie, ſweet, and delightful to you. Do you take more delinht in the Word than ever? are you more in love with ſecret Prayer, and more abundant in it? cannot you be content with your ordinary Seaſons, but are ever and anon making extraordinary viſits to Heaven? and upon all occaſions turning aſide to talk with God in ſome ſhort Ejaculations? are you often darting up your ſouls Heaven-wards? Is it meat and drink for you, to do the Will of God? do you come off more freely

with

with God, and answer his Calls, and open at his knocks, with more Alacrity and readiness of mind?

Sixthly, If you are more abundant in those duties which are most displeasing to the Flesh. Are you more earnest upon the duty of Mortification? are you more strict and severe than ever in the duty of daily Self-examination, and holy Meditation? do you hold the Reigns harder upon the Flesh than ever? do you keep a stricter watch upon your Appetites? do you set a stronger guard upon your Tongues? have you a more jealous eye upon your hearts?

Seventhly, If you grow more vile in your own eyes. Pride is such a choaking Weed, that nothing will prosper near it. Do you grow more out of love with mens esteem, and set less by it? are you not marvellous tender of being slighted? can you rejoyce to see others preferred before you? can you heartily value, and love them that think meanly of you?

Eightly, If you grow more quick of sense, more tender of sining, more sensible of Divine influences, or withdrawings. Are you more affraid of sin than ever? are your sins a greater pain to you than heretofore? are your very infirmities, your great afflictions? and the daily workings of corruption a continual grief of mind to you?

Ninthly, If you are acted more by love to God and Faith in these Promises. Fear is a slavish principle: do you find that you are acted less by fear, and more by love? do you look more frequently to the things not seen than ever? and doth the World abate in your esteem? do you go more out of your selves? do you live upon Christ as the Spring of your life, and make more use of him upon all occasions than ever? do you prize the Promise more, and hug and imbrace them with greater dearness, and live more upon them.

Tenthly, If you grow of a more publick Spirit. A selfish spirit is unworthy of a Christian: are the common concernments of Gods Glory, and the prosperity of the Church, much upon your hearts? will it no way content you to dwell in plenty, peace, and safety your selves, except you may see peace upon *Israel?* do the wounds in Gods Name and Glory go deep into you? are the sins of others your sorrows?

Time, and room, and strength fails to add means too, as I inteuded. I have trespassed in length already, may these be help,

helps to you to put you forward, and to help you in discerning your growth. I must conclude abruptly, and commend you to God with my dear loves to you all, I take leave, and can only tell you that I am,

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

JOS. ALLEINE

From the common Goale at Juel-
cheſter, *Octo.* 31. 1663.

LETTER. XV.

[Perſwaſion to Sinners, and comfort to Saints,]

To my dearly Beloved, the Inhabitants of the Town of Taunton, *Grace, Mercy, and Peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

Moſt dearly Beloved,

I Have been through mercy many years with you, and ſhould be willingly ſo many years a Priſoner for you, ſo I might eminently and effectually further your ſalvation. I muſt again, yea again, and again thank you for your abundant and intire affections to me, which I value as a great mercy not in order to my ſelf, if I know my own heart, but in order to your benefit, and I may thereby be a more likely Inſtrument to further your good. Surely, ſo much as I do value your love, which is not a little, yet had I rather (if I am not unacquainted with my ſelf) be forgotten and forſaken of you all, and buried in oblivion, So that your eyes and hearts might be hereby fixed on Chriſt, and ſincerely engaged to him. Brethren, I have not beſpoken your affections for my ſelf: O that I might win your hearts univerſally to Jeſus Chriſt, though I had loſt them for ever! O that I might be inſtrumental to convert you to him though you were diverted from me. I am perſwaded that I ſhould much rather

choose

chooſe to be hated of all, ſo this might be the means to have Chriſt honoured, and ſet up ſavingly in the hearts of you all. And indeed there is nothing great but in order to God; nothing is much material or conſiderable as it is terminated in us: It matters not whether we are in Riches or poverty, in ſickneſs or health, in honour or diſgrace, ſo Chriſt may be by us, magnified in the condition we are in. Welcome Priſon and poverty, welcome ſcorn and envy, welcome pains or contempt, if by theſe Gods glory may be moſt promoted. What are we for but for God? what doth the Creature ſignifie ſeparated from his God? why juſt ſo much as the Cypher ſeparated from the Figure, or the letter from the Syllable, we are nothing or nothing worth, but in reference to God and his ends. Better were it that we had never been, than that we ſhould not be to him. Better that we were dead than we ſhould live, and not to him. Better that we had no underſtandings than that we ſhould not know him. Better that we were Blocks and Bruis than that we ſhould not uſe our reaſon for him. What are our Intereſts unleſs as they may be ſubſervient to his Intereſt? or our eſteem or reputation, unleſs we may hereby glorifie him? do you love me? I know you do; but who is there that will leave his ſins for me? I mean at my requeſts: with whom ſhall I prevail to give up himſelf in ſtrictneſe and ſelf-denial to the Lord? who will be intreated by me to ſet upon neglected duties, or reform accuſtomed ſins? O wherein may you rejoyce me? in this, in this, my Brethren, in this you ſhall befriend me, if you obey the voice of God by me, if you be prevailed with to give your ſelves up throughly to the Lord? would you lighten my burden; would you looſen my bonds? would you make glad my heart? let me hear of your owning the ways and ſervants of the Lord in adverſity, of your coming in, of your abiding and patient continuing in the ways of holineſs. O that I could but hear that the prayerleſs Souls, the prayerleſs families among you, were now given to prayer! that the profane ſinner would be awakened, and be induced by the Preaching of theſe Bonds, which heretofore would not be prevailed with, to leave their drunkenneſs their looſe company, their lying and deceit, and Wantonneſs, by all the threatnings of God that could be pronounced againſt them,

nor all the beſeechings, wooings, and entreaties that I was able to uſe with them! will you not be made clean? when ſhall it once be? how long ſhall the patience of God wait for you? how long ſhall the Lord Jeſus ſtretch out his hands toward you? O ſinners, caſt your ſelves into his Arm? Why ſhould you die? why will you forſake your own mercy? will you periſh when mercy wooes you? confeſs and forſake your ſins, and you ſhall find mercy: will you part with Chriſt, and ſell your ſouls to perdition for a little eaſe and delight to your fleſh? or a little of the gain of unrighteouſneſs? or a little Ale or vain mirth, or looſe company? why theſe are the things that part between ſinners and Chriſt.

I know many are ſpun with a finer thred, and are not ſo far from the Kingdom of God, as the prayerleſs, ignorant, Sabbath-breaking, intemperate ſort are. But I muſt once again warn you of ſtaying in the ſuburbs of the City of Refuge. O what pity is it that any ſhould periſh at the Gates! that any ſhould eſcape the pollutions of the world and do many things yea, and ſuffer it may be too, and yet ſhould fall ſhort of the glory of God, for want of a through work of grace! Oh you halting Chriſtians, that halt between Chriſt and the World, that are as *Ephraim* like a Cake not turned, dow-baked, Profeſſors, that have Lamps without Oyl, that cry, Lord, Lord, but do not the will of our Father which is in Heaven! how long will you ſtay in the place of the breaking forth of Children? and ſtick between the womb and the World? your Religion will carry you among the profane deſpiſers of Godlineſs, but do own the people of the Lord, and do love the Miniſters and ordinances, therefore all is well. I tell you, Godlineſs is a heart-work, it goes deep, and ſpreads far: unleſs the frame of your hearts, and the drifts of your courſe be changed, unleſs you be univerſally conſcientious, and unreſervedly delivered up to the Lord for all times, and conditions whatever be the coſt, you are none of Chriſts, how far ſoever you go in common workings and external performances. Hear then, O people, and let not profaneneſs ſwallow you up: let not an almoſt Chriſtianity deceive you, or ignorance carry you blindfold to perdition. Oh the thouſands, and ten thouſands that have been undone by one of theſe! Ah how often have you been warned againſt them, leaſt you ſhould ſplit againſt

gainſt theſe dangerous Rocks. O *Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem*, ſaid Chriſt, and O *Taunton, Taunton*, may I ſay from him, how often? who can tell how often, would Gods ſervants have gathered you, and you would not? many, very many of you would not. But will you now? will you *yet* come in? I cannot forbear once more, even out of the Priſon to call after poor ſinners, and make one tender of mercy more. O come to the waters of Life, waſh you, make you clean; read with diligent obſervation, the melting paſſages, *Prov.* 1. 22. *to the end*, *Iſa.* 1. 16, 21. *Iſa.* 55. 6, 10. Oh obdurate ſinners, if none of theſe things move you!

But for you, whoſe very hearts are ſet againſt every ſin, and are deliberately reſolved for God and Holineſs before all the worlds delight; you that have experience of a thorow change, and are brought to have reſpect to all Gods Commandments, who will have none but God for your happineſs, none but Chriſt for your Treaſure, that muſt and will have him, come what will come, bleſſed are you of the Lord: O happy Souls rejoyce in the Lord, and again, I ſay, Rejoyce: let your ſouls magnifie the Lord, and your ſpirits rejoyce in God your Saviour. Live you a life of praiſe, you are highly favoured of the Lord, your Lines are fallen in a pleaſant place: only ſtick you faſt to your choice: Beware leſt any man beguile you of your reward: watch and keep your garments about you, leſt you walk naked, and men ſee your ſhame. Many will be plucking to pull you out of Chriſts hands; but the harder they pluck, the harder do you cling, and cleave to him, and the better hold faſt do you take of him: bleſſed is he that overcometh.

And now the God of Heaven fill you all with himſelf, and make all Grace to abound in you, and toward you, and that he may be a Sun to comfort you, and a Shild of protection to you, and ſhine with his happy Beams of Grace and Glory on you all: Farewel in the Lord, I am

Yours in the Bonds of the Goſpel,

JOS. ALLEINE

Auguſt, 28. 1663.

LETTER. XVI.

[How to live to God.]

To the Beloved People, the Inhabitants of the Town of Taunton, *Grace and Peace.*

Moſt endeared Chriſtians,

TO tell you I love and long for you, ſeems ſomewhat needleſs. I cannot doubt of your confidence that you have a deep ſhare in my tendereſt affections: for this let my labours among you, and the hazards for you ſpeak, rather that I my ſelf. Beloved, I am, without a Complement the devoted ſervant of your ſouls proſperity, and the intereſt of Chriſt in you: may the Lord Jeſus be ſet up higher in your hearts; may his name ever live in you, and be magnified by you, and I have what I ask. If this work be not promoted among you, I ſhall account all my letters but waſte Paper, and all my pains but loſt labour. Brethren, I beſeech you, that none of you live to your ſelves, for this were directly to croſs the very end of Chriſt's death: for therefore he died that you ſhould not live to your ſelves, 2 *Cor.* 5. 15. Oh live to him that died for you! live to him that is the God of your life! live to him that bought your lives with the expenſe of his own! To him that bought you from deſtruction; and not only ſo, bnt bought your names into the eternal Inheritance, reſerved in the Heavens for you. Will a man be eaſily perſwaded to loſe his life? how infinitely tender are men here! And yet in the worſt ſence the moſt of men do loſe their lives, yea, loſe them for nothing. Beloved, conſider, I beſeech you, that life is loſt, that is not lived unto God. If you would not loſs your lives that you live, ſee to him who is the end of your lives. Oh remember this, and reckon that day loſt which you have not lived unto God! Brethren how great a part of our lives have we really, alas! to too really loſt? I beſeech you take heed: here you are careful about many things, but beware that other things do not put out this which ſhould be the main of your cares, to wit, the ſpending your days and ſtrength for him that made you. Would it not be dreadful for a man to find at laſt when he comes

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to his account with God, that his whole life, or at leaſt the main of it had been but damnable ſelf-ſeeking. That a man ſhould have ſo many years allowed him by God, and he ſhould at laſt be found to have been but a falſe and wicked ſervant that had ſet up for himſelf with his Maſters ſtock, and alienated his goods, and turned them to his own uſe? Well, that you may throughly learn the grand leſſon of living unto God, take theſe Counſels:

Firſt, *Settle it upon your heart that it is the ſum of all your buſineſs and bleſſedneſs to live unto God:* 'Tis your *buſineſs*, for his pleaſure you are and were created: what have you elſe to do but to ſerve your Maker in your general and particular Callings? what was the Candle made for (ſaith one) but to be burnt? beloved, what elſe have you ſtrength for, but for God? doth he maintain ſervants, and ſhall not he look for their work; Would you endure it that the ſervants that you find with meat and wages ſhould ſet up for themſelves, that they ſhould eat your bread and all the while do their own work? beloved, Gods ſervice is your buſineſs, and he made you and keeps you for no other end; and it is your bleſſedneſs too. Labour to be under the rooted conviction of this principle, that your very happineſs lies in pleaſing and honouring of God. Let the ſenſe of this live freſh upon your hearts, and it will regulate your whole courſe.

Secondly, *Remember what a dangerous, yea, damnable thing it is to live to your ſelves:* To make it our main care and buſineſs to pleaſe and gratifie our ſelves, or to have applauſe from and reputation with others, or to grow rich in the world, and greaten our ſelves and poſterity, is the certain evidence of a graceleſs heart. And though the Godly do make God their principle end in general, yet they muſt know, that for ſo much of their lives ar is ſpent beſides, this end (which is too too much) they ſhall ſuffer loſs.

Thirdly, *Labour to keep alive upon your ſelves a deep ſenſe of your ſtrong obligations to God.* Often think with your ſelves what a righteous, what a reaſonable thing it is, that you ſhould with all that you have ſerve the Lord. Beloved, ſhall not the Veſſel be for the uſe of the Potter that made it? Shall not the ſervant Trade for his Maſter with whoſe goods he is entruſted? do yot not fetch all your bread from Gods door?

Is not he the Rock that begat you? the Author of your being and well-being? is not this he that can crucifie you or releaſe you? can ſave you or damn you at his pleaſure? Is it not from him that you fetch every breath? your intereſt obliges you to pleaſe him. Why ſhould *Beltſhazzars* charge be againſt you? that the God in whoſe hand your breach is, and whoſe are all your ways, you have not glorified, *Dan.* 5. 23.

Fourthly, *Do not only intend God as the general end of your courſe, but in every ſolemn action actually mind your end.* Though a man need not, cannot think of his Journeys-end at every ſtep, yet with care he might come to this in every ſolemn action, particularly and expreſly to mind his end: a man cannot (nor need he) think at every bit that he puts into his mouth, I will eat this for God: yet he might every time he ſits down to his Table, remember to eat and drink, not to gratifie his fleſh, but to glorifie God, by getting ſtrength for his work, you cannot think of it in every ſtep in your Journey; but without intending ſome glory to God by ſerving his will in your place and ſtation? and ſo in your viſits and labours.

Fifthly, *Every morning let this be your firſt and firm reſolution, I will ſet forth this day in the Name of God.* Your firſt and laſt thoughts are of greateſt conſequence; and therefore I adviſe you to begin and end with this: when ever you lie down, ſay in your ſelves, I will make uſe of my Bed as an ordinance of God, that a ſervant of his may be refreſhed and fitted for his work: when ever you riſe up, think I will ſpend this day for God, and follow the buſineſs of my calling, becauſe I am ſo appointed by God, *Zech.* 10. 12. And *they ſhall walk up and down in his Name, ſaith the Lord, &c.*

Beloved, I deſign the ſweetneſs and comforts, as well as ſtrictneſs of your lives. Live to God as you are directed, and you ſhall marvellouſly proſper in both. I am not ſure yet, whether or no I ſhall ſee you at the Aſſizes, which I earneſtly deſire to do. I leave all things to our Fathers wiſe diſpoſal, and commending you to God, I divide my loves among you, and ſo reſt

Yours in the bonds of the Lord Jeſus,

From the Priſon at Juelcheſter,
Nov. 14. 1663.

JOS. ALLEINE.

LETTER XVII.

[Motives to ſet our ſelves to pleaſe God.]

To the moſt Loving, and beſt Beloved, the ſervants of Chriſt in Taunton, *Grace and Peace:*

Moſt dear Chriſtians,

YOur Priſoner in the Lord ſaluteth you with all dearneſs: your are the care of my heart, the deſire of my Eyes, the joy of my Bonds, and the ſweet of my liberty. I am much ſatisfied in the wiſe diſpoſal of our Heavenly Father, whether he ſee it good for me to be a Bond-man, or a Free-man, ſo I may but ſerve your ſouls to the greateſt advantage. Methinks I begin to feel in my ſelf, more than ever the benefit of your Prayers; the influences of Heaven, through the riches of Free-grace (to which alone be the Praiſe) being more fully ſenſible, and ſweet upon me. I hope the Lord will reſtore us one to another in his time, much better than we parted; in the mean time, ſee that you ſtand faſt in the hope of the Goſpel. The Lord taketh infinite care for you, ſee that it be your care, the care of your very hearts, to pleaſe the Lord: Set your hearts to it as the buſineſs of your lives, and the very end of your beings, to walk worthy of the Lord unto all well-pleaſing. Set home on your ſelves ſuch conſiderations as theſe.

Firſt, *It is the very buſineſs you were made for, and ſent into the world for, to pleaſe your Maker.* For his pleaſure you are, and were Created. Why ſhould the Lord repent that he had made you? *Gen.6.6* What treacherous and damnable falſhood is this, that when the Lord hath given us Breath and Being, and ſent us into the World on purpoſe on his ſervice, we ſhould like falſe and wicked ſervants, ſet up for our ſelves? why ſhould your Creator ſay, he hath made you in vain?

Secondly, *If you ſet your hearts to pleaſe the Lord, you are ſure you ſhall pleaſe him.* It is not ſo with men, all the care in the World will not ſuffice to pleaſe ſome men. How often do Princes forſake their greateſt Favourites? ſo that if you ſet

to pleaſe men, you are not ſure to attain your end at laſt; yea, rather you are ſure not to attain it. But if the Lord doth ſee your very hearts be ſet to pleaſe him, he will accept you, though you come ſhort, 2 *Cor.* 8. 12. Read that ſweet paſſage, 2 *Chron.* 6. 75.

Thirdly, *It will be a certain ſign of your ſincerity, when the pleaſing of the Lord is your greateſt buſineſs, Phil.* 1. 20. To ſuch the Promiſe runs, *Iſa.* 56. 4. 5. It is a diſtinguiſhing evidence truly to ſeek and prize Gods favour, more then Corn, Wine, *Pſal.* 4. 6. 7.

Fourthly, *This will ſet all in order, and bring all your buſineſs to a Head, when you have ſet down this as the one thing neceſſary, that you are reſolved to pleaſe the Lord, this will regulate your whole lives, and bring all your buſineſs into a little compaſs.* A Chriſtian hath but one thing to do in all conditions, and that is to carry it ſo in his preſent ſtate, as that he may pleaſe God. A man-pleaſer: *O how many hath he to pleaſe!* what an endleſs work hath ſuch an one to do?

Fifthly, *Conſider but how careful the Man-pleaſing Paraſite, and time-ſerving Hypocrite is to pleaſe men*: and ſhall not we take as much care to pleaſe our God? oh how doth the flattering Courtier ſtudy the humour of his Prince? be you as careful to ſtudy, and to be acquainted with the mind of God. What will not men do to ſcrew themſelves into the favour of the Mighty? oh that you were but as diligent, and unwearied, and punctual in your endeavours, to get and to keep the favour of the Almighty?

Sixthly, *Conſider whoſe favour or diſpleaſure is of that conſequence to you, as the Lords is of.* What if men ſhould be angry with you, have they the Keys of Hell, and of Death? no, no, fear them not. Can they undo your Souls? can they ſend you to Hell? Alas they cannot. See that you dread his diſpleaſure that can. Alas what will their favour avail you? if they be pleaſed, can they ſtand between the wrath of God and you? can they pardon your ſins? ſave your ſouls? ſecure your Eternal concernments? where is all their favour or good will, when they or you come to die? It will not be worth a Ruſh when moſt needed. Therefore beloved Brethren, whatever you do keep in with God. Reſolve upon it, *He muſt* be pleaſed, though all the World be diſpleaſed. Let

it be enough to you to have his good will: let this be the *One thing* that you bend your ſelves to ſeek, and if you ſet to ſeek it, you may be ſure to find it. The Meſſenger ſtays for me, and ſo I muſt here ſhut up my Letter, as *Jude* doth his. *Ye Beloved, building up your ſelves in your moſt holy Faith, Praying in the Holy Ghoſt, keep your ſelves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt unto Eternal life.* Unto his Grace I commend you all, and ſhall add nothing but to ſhare my loves among, and ſo reſt,

Your Embaſſador in Bonds,

JOS. ALLEINE.

Juelcheſter, November 22. 1663.

LETTER, XVIII.

[The Worth of Holineſs,]

To the Beloved People the Flock of God in Taunton, *Grace and Peace.*

Moſt dear Friends, and Brethren,

I Am now a Priſoner of the Lord for you *Gentiles*, and therefore have ſent theſe few Lines, to beſeech you by theſe Bonds which I gladly endure for your ſakes, to hold forth, and hold faſt the profeſſion of your Faith without wavering. The Lord make you ſtedfaſt in the Holy Doctrine wherein you have been taught. I have not ſhunned to declare unto you the whole Counſel of God. O remember that by the ſpace of eight years, I ceaſed not to warn you every one, and kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have taught you publickly, and from Houſe to Houſe, warning every man, and teaching every man that I might preſent every man perfect in Chriſt Jeſus. Oh that Impenitent ſinners would yet remember the Invitations, and

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the obſecrations, and the obteſtations, that they have had! have they not been ſought unto? have they not been intreated? have they not been followed from the Publick, to their own Houſes? hath not the VVord been brought to their Doors? Hath not Mercy wooed them? have they not been called under the VVings of Mercy? And yet they would not. Oh that they would conſider it now in the latter dayes? *Jer.* 23. 20. Oh that they would remember, and repent, that there might be yet an after Harveſt? That they would yet come in and live! Are you yet willing to turn? hear how Wiſdom calls after you, *Prov.* 11. *How long ye ſimple ones will you love ſimplicity, and fools hate knowledge: turn you at my reproof.* But if they will not hear, good were it for them that they had never been born: *It* ſhall be more, and better for *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, then for them.

But for you that have taken upon you the Profeſſion of ſtrict Godlineſs, I ſhall only preſs you to follow on, and preſs towards the Mark. You have much work yet to do, and God hath given you no time to Loyter in. I beſeech you to put on. That Perſon that ſits down when he hath gotten to that pitch that he thinks will bring him to Heaven, is never like to come thither; Grace is one of thoſe things that ſaith, *It never hath enough.* Let me urge upon you the Apoſtles Counſel, *Heb.* 12. 14. *Follow after Holineſs.*

Firſt, Holineſs is the choiceſt Ornament: it is an adorning in the ſight of God, of great prize. It is the Glory of God, and will you count it your ſhame? *Exod.* 15. God is glorious in Holineſs, and Grace is called Glory, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. But we may now cry out as the *Pſalmiſt*, in his complaint, *O ye ſons of men, how long will ye turn my Glory into ſhame? Pſ.* 4. 2. But be of good comfort, the ſhame of Holineſs is real Glory: how confidently doth *Paul* ſhake his Chain? *Acts* 28. 20. We read of ſome that did glory in their ſhame in a ſad ſenſe, that is in that which was real ground of ſhame, to wit, their ſin, *Phil.* 3. 19. But we meet with others that in a happy ſenſe, did glory in their ſhame; that is in the ſhame of Religion, which is indeed a Crown of Glory. So did *Peter* and *John*, *Acts* 5. 41.

Secondly, Holineſs is the ſafeſt Muniment: Grace is not onely for Ornament, but for Uſe. Righteouſneſs is a Breſt-

plate

plate that keeps the Vitals, and is a ſure defence from any mortal wounds, *Epheſ.* 6. 14. When the Politicians have done their beſt with all their politick fetches, it is he *that walketh uprightly*, that *walketh ſurely*, *Prov.* 10. 19. *Let integrity and uprightneſs preſerve me*, ſaith *David*, *Pſal.* 25. Laſt. I deſire no other Protection than Innocency. I deſire to be no longer ſafe than theſe can preſerve me; when I muſt let go my Integrity or my ſafety, I will chuſe the danger rather than the ſin: and yet will never doubt but my Integrity will ſave me harmleſs, and prevent me for ever coming off a Loſer. Never perſwade me that that man doth chooſe wiſely or will conſult in his own ſafety, that runs upon the diſpleaſure of the infinite God, who is a devouring fire, to flie the danger of mans diſpleaſure. Did you ever read or hear of a man ſo mad as to run upon the Swords point, to avoid the ſcratch of a Pin? or to run upon a roaring Canon, rather than danger his being wetſhod? why this is the beſt wiſdom of the diſtracted World, who will ſin rather than ſuffer, and to ſave themſelves harmleſs in the World, will run upon God, even upon his neck, and the thick Boſſes of his Buckler, *Job* 15. 25. 26.

Thirdly, Holineſs will be found to be your real happineſs: Eat of this Tree, and you ſhall be indeed as God. Godlineſs is Gods likeneſs. The beauty of Holineſs is this very Image; Sin is the diſeaſe of which Holineſs is the Cure. Pride is the Timpany, paſſion the Feavour of the mind, how reſtleſly raging is the mind where they reign? holineſs, humility, meekneſs, are a preſent eaſe, a preſent Cure, if the Patient can take but enough. O what peace and tranquility doth Holineſs work in the Mind! *Great peace have they that love thy Commandments, and nothing ſhall offend them*, *Pſalm* 119. 165. Read *Iſa* 48. 18. 22. and 26. 3. and 32. 17. Holineſs will be a treaſure of Riches, *Jam.* 2. 5. and a Crown of honour, *Acts* 17. 11. A Paradiſe of pleaſure to you, *Prov.* 3 17. In a word, Holineſs is the perfection of mans nature, *Heb* 12 21. The Communication of the Divine Nature, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4 The earneſt of Glory, *Mat.* 5. 8. And the very entrance of Heaven, *Phil.* 3. 20.

Let me ſay now to every one of you, as our Saviour to *Martha*, *John* 11. 26. *Believeſt thou this?* If you do, live like Believers,

Believers, and do you follow after Holineſs as others follow their Trades or Studies. Let Religion be your buſineſs, and not a thing by the by with you: follow as hard upon the purſuit of Grace, as if you did indeed believe riches and honour were in it. Count your ſelves well, as long as you keep within the line of your duty. Let holineſs ſit in your Lips, and ſeaſon all your Speech with grace. Profeſs it, own it, plead ſtoutly and reſolve for it, be you Advocates for Holineſs, in an Adulterous and wicked Generation, wear it as a Robe of honour, when the ſpightful World caſt the dung of their Reproaches at you for it: let it dwell in your hearts: Let it adorn your Houſes: let it be your Companion in your Cloſets: Let it Travel with you in your Journies: let it lie down and riſe up with you: let it cloſe your eyes in the Evening, and call you out of your Beds in the Morning. Be you the votaries of Holineſs: keep her, and ſhe ſhall keep you.

I ſhall cloſe with my loves to you all, only becauſe I know you love to hear of my well-fare: I muſt tell you that goodneſs and mercy do follow me perpetually every day, and every night, Glory to God in the higheſt. Dear Brethren, Fare you well in the Lord, I am

Your Devoted Servant in the Goſpel, whether a Bond-man, or a Free,

JOS. ALLEINE.

From the common Gaole at Juelcheſter, December 3. 1663.

Moſt Dearly Beloved,

This was intended for you a Week ſooner then it comes to be communicated. I purpoſely write in the middle of the Week, that if any Opportunity be ſuddenly offered, I may have ſomewhat ready for you: but laſt week I failed of a Conveyance, I ſhall not add anything further now, but that I ſhall follow my Counſels with my Prayers, and ſhall be an humble

humble Interceſſor night and day before God for you: to him I commend you, and to the Word of his Grace,

Remaining Yours while I am,

J. A.

LETTER XIX.

[1. Try. 2. Rejoyce.]

To the moſt loving, and beſt beloved, the Flock of Chriſt in Taunton, *Grace and Peace.*

Moſt endeared Friends,

MY heart is ſolicitous for you: your Spiritual and Eternal welfare is the matter of my deſires and deſigns. Let not my Beloved think they were forgotten by me, becauſe you heard not from me the laſt Week: ſleep departed from my eyes to write to you at large; but in the morning I concluded it beſt, to defer the imparting of it to you for a ſeaſon, that you might have it a better way. Can a woman forget her Child, that ſhe ſhould not have compaſſion on the Son of her Womb? yea, they may forget, but Chriſt will earneſtly remember you ſtill. Natural Parents may be ſo far unnatural; ſpiritual Parents may be ſo far carnal, as to forget their own Children: I would have you count nothing as certain but Chriſts love and care. This you may build upon: You need not fear leſt time and diſtance ſhould wear out the remembrance of you with him: your names are inrolled in the everlaſting Decrees of Heaven, and a whole Eternity hath not been able to wear them out. Do any of you queſtion whether you are ſo happy as to have your names recorded above? I ſhall bring it to a ſpeedy iſſue: Do you queſtion whether Chriſt hath taken your names? whether you are upon his heart? Let me ask you, Is *Heaven upon your Hearts?* Is the Name of Jeſus deeply engraven upon your

your Souls? *Is* his *Image* and Superſcription there? *If* you can find that Heaven is the main of your cares, that your hearts are ſet upon it as your home and your Countrey; and that it is your great buſineſs to ſeek it and ſecure it, then never doubt, if your Hearts be chiefly upon Heaven, your Names are unqueſtionable written in Heaven. Again, hath Chriſt recorded his name in your Hearts? *Is* the Name of Jeſus the Beloved name with you? precious above all; next to your hearts? *Is* there no other Name under heaven ſo dear and ſweet to you? What room hath Chriſt in you? If any thing be deeper in your hearts than he is, you are unſound. As the Father hath given him, ſo do your hearts give him a Name above every Name: *Is* Chriſt uppermoſt with you in your eſtimations and affection? Then rejoyce and leap for joy, your Names are moſt precious with Chriſt, if his Name be above all dear to you. Once more, hath Chriſt drawn out his own ſimilitude upon You! *Is* Chriſt within you? doth he dwell in your Hearts? Then be ſure you have a room in his heart: The *Image* of Chriſt is in holineſs. *Is* this that which your very hearts are ſet upon? Do you thirſt for Holineſs? Do you follow after Holineſs? Do you prize it above all proſperity and worldly greatneſs? Do you hate every ſin and long to be rid of it as your moſt irkſome burden? and uſe all Gods means againſt it as far as you know them? If it be thus with you, Chriſt hath ſet his ſtamp upon your hearts, and ſo you may be ſure he hath ſet you as a Seal upon his heart.

Rejoyce then, O Chriſtians, and bleſs your ſelves in the happy priviledge that you have, in being under Chriſts care. Fear not little Flock; Stronger is he that is with you, than he that is againſt you: What though Satan ſhould raiſe all his Militia againſt you, adhere to Chriſt in a patient doing & ſuffering his pleaſure and he ſhall ſecure you: The Lord will not forſake you, becauſe it hath pleaſed the Lord to make you his people: God hath entruſted you with his Son: You are his Care and his Charge: Many will be lifting at you, many will be plucking at you, but fear nor, you ſhall not be moved, none ſhall pluck you out of Chriſts hand, he hath all power, *Mat.* 28.8. Can Omnipotence ſecure you? He is all Treaſures, *Col.* 2. 3. Can unſearchable Riches ſuffice you?

In

In a word, he is all fullneſs, *Col.* 1. 21. Can all content you? Can Fulneſs fill you? if ſo, you are bleſſed and ſhall be bleſſed.

Beloved, We looſe unutterably for want of conſidering, for want of viewing our own Priviledges, and Bleſſedneſs. O Man, is Chriſt thine, and yet doſt thou live at a low rate and Comfort? Is thy Name written in heaven, and yet doſt thou not rejoyce? Shall the Children of the Kingdom, the Candidates of Glory, the choſen Generation, the Royal Prieſthood, be like other men? O Chriſtians, Remember who and whence you are, conſider your Obligations, put on a better pace; Beſtir your ſelves, run and wreſtle, and be ſtrong for the Lord of Hoſts (and earneſtly, yet peaceably) contend for the Faith once delivered to his Saints; What ſhall we make nothing of all that God hath ſaid and done for us? O Chriſtians, ſhall he that hath gotten an inriching Office boaſt of his Booty? or he that hath obtained the Kings Patent for an Earldome, glory in his Riches and Honour? And ſhall the Grant of Heaven ſignifie little with thee? Or Chriſts Patent for thy Son-ſhip and Partnerſhip with himſelf be like a Cypher? Shall *Hamon* come home from the Banquet with a glad heart, and glorying in the greatneſs of his Riches, the multitude of his Children, and all the things wherein the King had promoted him above the Princes? And ſhall we turn over our Bibles and read the Promiſes, and find it under Gods own hand, that he intends the Kingdom for us, that he will be a Father to us, that he gives and grants all his infinite perfections to us, and yet not be moved? Beloved Chriſtians, live like your ſelves, let the Word ſee that the Promiſes of God, and Priviledges of the Goſpel are nor empty ſounds, or a meer Crack. Let the Heavenly cheerfulneſs and the reſtleſs diligence, and the holy raiſedneſs of your Converſations prove the reality, excellency, and beauty of your Religion to the World. Forget not your Priſoner. Labour earneſtly for me in your Prayers, who am night and day labouring and ſuffering for you. I can never bleſs God enough for his moſt tender & indulgent care for you, which appears ſo wonderfully in his Fatherly Protection, and his Fatherly Proviſion. See that you receive not the Grace of God in vain. Remember with

trembling

trembling, that of our Lord, *To whom much is given of him much shall be required.* With my most dear loves to you all, I commend you to your Father and my Father, your God and my God, remaining

Yours in all manner of Obligations,

JOS. ALLEINE.

From the common Goal at Juelchester, January 20. 1663.

LETTER XX.

[The Felicity of Believers.]

To the most beloved People, the servants of God in Taunton, *Salvation.*

Most endeared Christians,

I Have longed and waited for a little breathing time, wherein I might write unto you, but I have been oppressed hitherto with so many cares, and such a throng of business, that till now (and scarcely now) I have had no time of respiration, wherein I might sufficiently reflect on you, or my self. But although so great a part of *Taunton* be translated to *Juelchester* with me, yet I may not, I cannot forget you that are behind.

Alas poor *Taunton*, how should I bewail thee! did I look upon thee only with the Eye of sense, Alas! for thy wonted liberties, for thy former plenty, and variety wherewith the Lord hath blessed thee? he had spread a Table for thee in the midst of thine Enemies; Bread hath been given thee, and thy Waters have been sure: But now a Famine seems to threaten thee, and the Comforters that should relieve thy Soul are far from thee. Thy Shepheards are removed. Thou seest not thy Signs, nor thy Prophets, and thy wonted helper

helpers are now disabled from giving thee supplies, Alas, how do thine enemies triumph, and thy Teachers and thine Inhabitants are become their Captives! and how great is the cry of thy poor, and thine oppressed!

Such would be the language of sense, if that were suffered to be the Speaker. But faith will speak in another Dialect. And therefore amongst my other Counsels, that I shall send you, this shall be the first.

Judge not of the present Providences, by the conduct of sense, but by the eye of Faith. Faith will see that we are then most honoured, when we are most vilified, and reproached, and set at nought for the sake of *Christ*; and that we are then most happy, when the World hath done its worst to make us miserable. Faith will tell you, that GOD is a very present help, when you seem quite to fail of help; and will shew you the Well of water, that is near, when the Water in the Bottle is spent. What though you seem to have lost Ministers, Husbands, Friends for a Season? Faith will tell you, that they are well bestowed, and that it will be both your, and their advantage, in the Day of Retribution.

Brethren, what are you for? are you for the present world or for that that to come? are you for your temporal enjoyments, or do you seek for Glory, Honour, and Immortality? If you are for this World, you have made a very imprudent choice, in taking up the Profession of Godliness and cleaving to and owning the hated ways of the Lord; But if you are for Glory, and for Eternity, then be of good chear, all these things do make for us. You are witnesses how often I have told you of these things, and I can say with the Apostle, I believe therefore have I spoken, and therefore I am nothing moved with all these things, nor with the things that do yet further betide me. I believe, and therefore I told you, that you should never be losers by *Jesus Christ*. Nay do I say I told it you, you know the Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed you, that the persecuted are doubtly blessed; that such should rejoyce, and leap for joy, because great is their reward in Heaven. Hath not God said, that if we suffer with him we shall also Reign with him; and that these light afflictions work for us a weight of Glory? And if this be

 true,

true, I pray you, tell me whether GOD hath not dealt well with us in counting us worthy of this little Tribulation for his Name? Indeed the Sufferings is but little; but verily the Reward will not be little. I know whom I have trusted: I am well assured the Glasse is turned up, and every hour reckoned of our Imprisonment, and every Scorn and Reproach of our Enemies is kept in Black and VVhite. *I* believe, therefore do *I* speak; GOD is infinitely tender of us, my Brethren, though a Poor and despicable Generation. *I* value not the Pot-gun threats of a frowning world; 'tis well with us, we are GODS Favourites. Come my Beloved, let us sit down under his Shadow: Here is safety, and rest, if God be for us, who can be against us? Verily he Bottles all our Tears, and tells all our wandrings: He numbers all our hairs, whosoever toucheth us shall not be *Innocent*. Know you not that we are the Apple of his Eye? Hath not he reproved the greatest for his Peoples sakes, saying reproach not mine anointed? And so we forget how he loved us. Are not we his Jewells? Doth he not own us for his Members, for his Children?

Ah what a Block doth Unbelief make of man? VVhat, do you think that all this doth signifie nothing? Can you forget your Children? VVill you suffer your Jewells to lie in the Dirt, or make no reckoning of them whether they are lost?

Verily *I* write not this without shaming reflections upon my own stupidity. VVhat, Beloved of God, adopted by God! VVhat, a Member of Christ Jesus! A Vessel of Mercy! An heir of Glory? VVhat, and not yet swallowed up in the sense of Gods infinite love! Blush, Oh my Soul, and be cōfounded before the most High, & cover thy face with shame.

I remember what the Heathen *Seneca* writes, observing the expressions of Gods love to man in his common Providence; *Verum est, usque in delicias Amamur*, That is, it is a very truth, we are Beloved of God even as his darlings.

My Brethren, Have Faith in God. Believe his Promises: VValk in the sense of his love. Comfort your selves in Gods love towards you, under all the hatred and envy of men, and the contradiction of sinners that you meet with. Be strong and of a good Courage, God is for you. Be assured that he that walketh uprightly, walketh surely: Forsake not

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the assembling of your selves together. Now see that you speak often to one another, and build up each other in the holy Faith. God knows *I* cannot do for you, as *I* would; *I* would have been larger to you, but *I* cannot. My most dear loves *I* desire you to share among you. *I* am greatly Yours. The Peace that passeth all Understanding keep your hearts and minds. *I* am

Yours to serve you and for you with all readiness of mind.

JOS. ALLEINE.

From the Prison at *Juelchester*, *July* 28*th*. 1665.

LETTER, XXI.

[What do you more than others?]

To the most dearly Beloved, the Servants in Taunton, *Grace and Peace.*

Most loving and entirely Beloved,

YOu are a great Joy to me. *I* know not what thanks to render to the Lord for you, when *I* hear of your Constancy, and Fidelity, and Zeal, in adhering to him, and his ways, even in such a time as this, you are highly favoured, Blessed be the Lord God of *Israel*, that he hath regarded the low Estates of his Servants: That he should even indulge you as he hath, and hover over you, even as the Eagle stirreth up her Nest, and fluttereth over her Young, spreadeth abroad her Wings, taketh them, beareth them on her Wings; for so hath the Lord your God dealt with you: He hath kept you as the Apple of his Eye, and since the Streams of *Cherith* were dried up, yet to this day he hath not suffered the handful of Meal to waste, nor the Oyl in

the Cruſe to fail, but (though you have no certainty to truſt to) hath continually provided for you to the full. How ſhould I love and bleſs the Lord for this his great Grace towards you, while I live? Now I beſeech you my Brethren, that you conſider the Kindneſs of the Lord; for the Lord your God is he that careh for you, and that you love the Lord your God, and fear him for ever, for he is your Life, and the Length of your Daies. And as *Job* had a holy fear of his Children, leaſt they ſhould have offended: So my moſt dearly Beloved, I am jealous of you with a Godly jealouſie, leſt any of you ſhould receive this Grace of God in vain. I muſt not ceaſe to put you in mind, that God doth look from no ſmall matter from you. Remember my moſt endeared Charge, that the Lord doth look for ſingular things from you, that there be not a barren Tree nor a Dwarf Chriſtian among you; where the Lord doth ſtrow much, he looks to gather much; and where he ſoweth much, he expects to reap accordingly. Whoſe account my Beloved, is like to be ſo great as yours? O look about you, and think of the Maſter coming to Reckon with you for his Talents; when he will expect no ſmall increaſe. Beloved, what can you do? How much are you grown? What ſpoil have you made upon your Corruptions? What progreſs in Grace?

Suppoſe Chriſt ſhould put the awakening queſtion to you, What do you more than others? Beloved, God doth expect more of his People, than of any others in the world beſides: And well he may. For

Firſt, *He hath beſtowed more on them than on others:* Now where much is given, much ſhall be required: Can you think of that without trembling? He hath beſtowed on them ſingular Love more than on others; *Thou only have I known of all the Families on Earth.* He hath a diſtinguiſhing Love and favour for his People, and he looks that his love ſhould be a conſtraining Argument to Obedience. Again he hath laid out a ſingular care on his People, more than on others: He cares for no man, for nothing in all the World, in comparſon of them. He reproveth Kings for their ſakes. He will give Nations, and Kingdoms for their Ranſome. So precious are they in his ſight, and ſo dearly Beloved, that he will give men for them, and People for their Life. He withdraweth

withdraweth not his Eyes from the Righteous, he will not indure them out of his ſight. The Eyes of the Lord are upon the Righteous, and firſt the eye of his more accurate Obſervation: God can winck at others as it were, and overlook what they do with little notice, but he hath a moſt curious Eye upon his People, he marketh their ſteps, & booketh their words, he weigheth their Actions, and pondereth all their goings. And ſhould they not walk more cautiouſly, and charily, than any alive, that are under ſo exact and curious an Eye? Secondly the Eye of ſpecial Care, and Protection. Behold the Eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him. I will guide thee with mine Eye: And ſhould not they be infinitely tender and careful how to pleaſe the Lord, who have his ſingular Care laid out on them? In ſhort, God hath beſtowed on them ſingular Priviledges, more than others: Theſe are a peculiar Treaſure to him above all People, a Kingdom of Prieſts, an holy Nation, a ſingular ſeparated People, they dwell alone, they are diverſe from all People: When the whole world lies in wickedneſs, theſe are Called and Choſen, and Faithful, Waſhed, and Juſtified, and Sanctified in the name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the Spirit of our God. The reſt are the Refuſe: Theſe the Jewels: Theſe are taken, and they are left. Shall not Gods Prieſts be Cloathed with Righteouſneſs, and ſhall not Princes Live above the rate of Peaſants?

Secondly, *He hath intruſted them with more then others*; Not onely with the Talents of his Grace (for the increaſe whereof they muſt give a ſtrict account) but alſo with the Jewel of his Glory. How tenderly ſhould they walk, that are entruſted with ſuch a Jewell? Remember, your makers Glory is bound up in your fruitful walking.

Thirdly, *He hath qualified them more than others.* He hath put into them a Principle of Life, having quickned them together with Chriſt. He hath ſet up a light in their Minds, when others lie in Darkneſs. He hath given them other Aids, than others have, even his Spirit to help their Infirmities, when others lie like Veſſels that are .VVindbound, and cannot ſtir.

Fourthly, *He hath provided for them other manner of things than for others.* Theſe are the little Flock to whom it

is his good pleaſure to give the Kingdom; great are the preparations for them. The Father hath prepared the Kingdom for them from the foundations of the World: the Son is gone to Heaven on purpoſe to prepare a place for them: The Spirit is preparing them, and making them meet to be partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light: and ſhould theſe be like other People?

Brethren beloved, God and Men do expect you ſhould do more then others, ſee that that you be indeed ſingular. For

1. If you do no more for God than others, he will do more againſt you then others: *You onely have I known, therefore will I puniſh you.* The barren Tree in the Vineyard muſt down, whereas had he been in the Common he might have ſtood much longer. God looked for Grapes from his Vineyard, on which he had beſtowed ſuch care and coſt more than ordinary, but when they bring forth wild Grapes, he will lay them waſte in a worſe manner than the Forreſt When Chriſt came to the Fig-tree ſeeking fruit, and met with none, he curſt it from the root, whereas had it been a Thorn or Bramble, it might have ſtood as before.

2. If you do no more than others, you muſt look for no more than others: If you ſhould put off God with a common obedience, you muſt expect to be put off with common mercies.

3. Except you do more than others, God will be diſhonoured more by you than others.

I have been too long with you, but I am earneſtly deſirous you ſhould be ſenſible of Gods extraordinary expectations from you. And truly, as God looks for more from his own than others, ſo he looks for more from you than others, even of his own, becauſe that he hath done more: See that you be ſhining Chriſtians, that you be ſtrong in the grace of God, that you preſs towards the mark. But I muſt conclude; I give my loves among you all, being able to add no more, but that I am

Yours in fervent Loves and Longings,

JOS. ALLEINE.

From the Priſon at Juelcheſter,
Jan. 2. 1663.

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LETTER XXII.

[Christian Care, Faith, Self-denial.]

To the most Beloved People, the Servants of God in Taunton, *Salvation.*

Most endeared Christians,

THe reason why my Letters have not of late come so thick as formerly to you, is not because I forgot to love you, and to care for you; but because I have been busily taken up in other labors of sundry kinds for you. I am yours, and love to be so, being ambitious not to have dominion over your faith, but to be a helper of your Joy. Christs Officers are so your Rulers in the Lord, as yet to Preach not themselves, but the Lord Jesus Christ, and themselves your servants for Jesus sake. I have no greater felicity under God, than to serve the good of souls. Brethren beloved, how fares it with your souls? are they in health? do they prosper? I wish your temporal prosperity. It it a joy to me to hear when your trade doth florish: but these are but very little things if we look into Eternity. Brethren, my ambition for you is, that you should be Cedars among the Shrubs, that from you should sound out the Word of the Lord, and that in every place your Faith to God-ward should be spread abroad. That *Taunton* should be as a field that the Lord hath blessed: that you should not only have the Name, but the Spirit, Life, Power, Heat, Growth, Vigour of Christianity among you. Let not *Taunton* onely have the name to live, and be noted for the profession of Religion, but see to it my Brethren, that the Kingdom of God be with you: Oh that every one of your souls might be a Temple of God! Oh that every one of your Families might be a Church of God! Beloved, look to it, that every one that nameth the name of Christ among you do depart from Iniquity, secret as well as open, of the heart as as well as of the life. Let no man think that to make an out-cry upon the *wickedness of the times*, and to be of the *Professing Party*, will serve his turn; many go

to Hell in the company of the wise Virgins. That no man may be a *Self-deceiver*, let every man be a *Self-searcher*. He that keeps no Day-book in his Shop, and no Account, no Record in his Conscience, his Estate aud his Soul will thrive both alike. Beloved, I would that you should remember whither you are a going. If a man be after a few Months to be Transported into another Countrey, never to return more, he will send over whatever he can, and make the best Provision that he may against he comes into another Countrey. Dear Brethren, you are Strangers and Pilgrims here, and have but a few Months abode in this Countrey, see that you Traffique much with Heaven. Christ is our Common Factor, O send over to him what possible you can. Give Alms plentifully, pray continually, be much in Meditation and Consideration; Reckon with your selves daily: Walk with God in your Callings: do all the duties of your Relations as unto God: live not one day to your selves, but unto Christ: Set forth continually in his Name, so shall you be continually Transporting into another World, and laying up Treasure in Heaven: And O the blessed store that you shall find there after a few Years diligence in such a holy course! Beloved, while you are here in this World, You are but like a Merchants Ship in a strange Port, the day for your return is set, and you are to stay no longer then till your Fraight is ready. Be wise, know your season, improve you time, you are made or mar'd for ever, as you speed in this one Voyage. There is no returning again to this Countrey to mend a bad Market, God will call in all his Talents, time shall be no longer. Oh, come in, come and buy now while the Market is open, that you that want may have grace and you that have may have it more abundantly. Go and plead with the Lord Jesus, that he hath bid you *come, buy and eat* without Money, and without Price; that he hath counselled you to come buy of him Gold, Raiment, and Eye-salve; tell him you are come according to his call, and wait upon him for Grace, for Righteousness, for Light and Instruction: Lay hold on his Word, plead it, live upon it; he is worthy to be believed, worthy to be trusted, go out of your selves to him, unlearn your selves. There is a threefold Foot that carnal-self stands upon, our own *Wisdom*,

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our own *Righteouſneſs*, our own *Strength*, theſe three Feet muſt be cut off, and we muſt learn to have no ſubſiſtence in our ſelves but onely in Chriſt, and to ſtand onely on his bottom. Study the excellent Leſſon of Self-denial, Self-annihilation, A true Chriſtian is like a Vine that cannot ſtand of it ſelf, but is wholly ſupported by the Prop it leans on. It is no ſmall thing to know our ſelves to be nothing, of no might, of no worth, of no underſtanding, nor reality; to look upon our ſelves as helpleſs, worthleſs, fooliſh empty ſhadows. This holy littleneſs is a great matter; when we find that all our Inventory amounts to nothing but folly, weakneſs, and beggery; when we ſet down our ſelves for Cyphers, our gain for loſs, our excellencies for very vanities, then we ſhall learn to live like Believers. A true Saint is like a Glaſs without a Foot, that ſet him where you will, is ready to fall every way till you ſet him to a Prop: Let Chriſt be the only ſupport you lean unto. When you are throughly emptied and nullified, and ſee all comelineſs to be but as a withered Flower, dead, dried, and paſt recovery, then you will be put upon the happy neceſſity of going out to Chriſt for all.

The Meſſengers haſte forceth me Abruptly to end here: I can add no more, but my Prayers to my Counſels, and ſo commending you to God, and the Word of his Grace, I reſt

The fervent well-willer of your Souls,

JOS. ALLEINE.

From the Priſon at Juelcheſter, *April* 16. 1663.

LET-

LETTER XXIII.

[Right Reasons in Suffering.]

To the most loving, and best beloved, the Flock of Christ in Taunton, *Grace and Peace.*

Most loving and dearly Beloved,

I Know not what thanks to render to you, nor to God for you, for all the unexpressable love which I have found in you towards me; and not terminatively to me, but to Christ in me; for I believe it is for his sake, as I am a Messenger and Embassador of his to you, that you have loved me and done so much every way for me; and I think I may say of *Taunton* as the Psalmist of *Jerusalem*, *If I forget thee, let my right hand forget her cunning, if I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.* I would not, my dear Brethren, that you should be dejected or discouraged at the late disappointments: for through the goodness of God I am not, but rather more satisfied than before: and this I can truly say, nothing doth sadden me more than to see so much sadness in your faces. As on the contrary nothing doth comfort me so much as to see your chear and courage. Therefore I beseech you, Brethren, faint not because of my Tribulation, nor of Gods delays, but strengthen the hands, and the feeble knees. And the Lord bolster up your hands, as they did the hands of *Moses*, that they may not fall down till *Israel* do prevail. Let us fear lest there be some evil among us, that God being angry with us, doth send this farther tryal upon us. Pray earnestly for me lest the eye of the most jealous God should discern that in me which should render me unfit for the mercy you desire. And let every one of you search his heart, and search his house to see if there be not cause there: Let not these disappointments make you to be nevertheless in love with Prayers, but the more out of love with

with ſin. Let us humble our ſelves under the mighty hand of God, and he ſhall exalt us in due time. And for the enemies of God, you muſt know alſo that their foot ſhall ſlide in due time. Let the Servants of God encourage themſelves in their God: for in the things wherein they deal proudly, he is above them: therefore fret not your ſelves becauſe of evil doers; commit your cauſe to him that judgeth righteouſly. Remember that you are bid if you ſee oppreſſion of the poor, and violent perverting of Judgement and Juſtice in a Province, not to marvel at the matter: verily, there is a God that judgeth in the Earth: and you have the liberty of appeals: reſt in the Lord, and wait patiently for him, and fret not your ſelves, becauſe of the men that bring wicked deviſes to paſs: take heed that none of you do with *Peter* begin to ſink, now you ſee the waters rough, and the winds boyſterous: theſe things muſt not weaken your Faith, nor cool your Zeal: for they are great arguments for the ſtrengthning of it. What clearer evidence can there be for the future judgment and perdition of the ungodly, and Coronation of the Juſt in another life, than the moſt unjuſt proceedings that are here upon Earth: ſhall not the Judge of all the Earth ſee right to be done? We ſee here nothing but confuſion and diſorder, the wicked receiveth according to the work of the righteous, and the Innocent according to the work of the wicked. The Godly periſh and the wicked flouriſh; theſe do proſper, and they do ſuffer. What, can it be ever thus! no doubtleſs, there muſt be a day when God will Judge the world in righteouſneſs, and rectifie the preſent diſorders, and reverſe the unrighteous Sentences that have been paſſed againſt his ſervants. And this evidence is ſo clear, that many of the Heathen Philoſephers have from this very Argument (I mean the unrighteous uſage of the good) concluded that there muſt certainly be rewards and puniſhments adjudged by God in another World.

Nor yet loſe your Zeal: now is the time that the love of many doth wax cold: but I bleſs God it is not ſo with you: I am ſure your love to me is, as true Friends ſhould be, like the *Chimneys*, warmeſt in the Winter of Adverſity: and I hope your love to God is much more, and I would that you

You ſhould abound yet more and more. Where elſe ſhould you beſtow your Loves? Love ye the Lord, ye his Saints, and cling about him the faſter now ye ſee the world is ſtriving to ſeparate you from him. How many are they that go to knock off your fingers! O methinks, I ſee what tugging there is. The World is plucking, and the Devil is plucking: Oh, hold faſt, I beſeech you; hold faſt, that no man take your Crown. Let the Water that is ſprinkled, yea, rather poured upon your love, make it to flame up the more. Are you not betrothed unto Chriſt? Oh remember, remember your Marriage Covenant: did you not take him for Richer for Poorer, for better for worſe: now prove your love to Chriſt to have been a true conjugal love, in that you can love him when moſt ſlighted, deſpiſed, undervalued, blaſphemed among men. Now acquit your ſelves, not to have followed Chriſt for the Loaves, now confute the Accuſer of the Brethren, who may be ready to ſuggeſt of the beſt of you, as he did of *Job*, *Doth he ſerve the Lord for nought?* And let it be ſeen that you loved Chriſt and holineſs purely for their own ſakes, that you can love a naked Chriſt when there is no hopes of worldly advantage, or promoting of ſelf-intereſt in following him.

Yet beware that none of you do ſtick to the wayes of Chriſt and Religion upon ſo carnal an account as this, becauſe this is the way that you have *already taken up*, and you count it a *ſhame* to recede from *your Principles*: I am very jealous leſt ſome Profeſſors ſhould miſs of their reward for this: leaſt they ſhould be accounted Turn-coats and Hypocrites; therefore they will ſhew a ſtoutneſs of ſpirit in going on, ſince they have once begun, and cannot with honour retreat. Would you choſe holineſs and ſtrictneſs, if it were to do again? would you enter your ſelves among Gods poor people, if it were now firſt to do. Would you have taken up the Profeſſion of Chriſt, though you had foreſeen all this that is come and coming? This will do much to evidence your ſincerity. But I forget that I am writing a Letter, being prone to paſs all bounds when I have thus to do with you. The Lord God remember and reward you and your labours of love. The Eternal God be your refuge,

and

and put under you his everlasting Arms. The Peace of God that passeth all understanding keep your hearts. Christs Legacy of Peace I leave with you, and rest, with my dear affections to you all,

Your Embassador in Bonds,

JOS. ALLEINE.

LETTER XXIV.

[Councel for Salvation.]

To the most beloved People, the servants of God in Taunton, *Salvation.*

Most endeared Christians,

MY continual solicitude for your State, will not suffer me to pass in quiet one week without Writing to you, unless I am extraordinarily hindred. Your sincerity, stedfastness, and proficiency in the grace of God, is the matter of my earnest desire, and that which I should account my self happy in. I have a longing desire to see the Faces of you all, and (besides mine expectation) shall (I trust) speedily have the opportunity to see you at the approaching Assizes, which I shall greatly rejoyce in, notwithstanding our coming may be otherwise attended with many Inconveniencies. In the mean time I send you a few Prison Counsels. As,

1. *To improve for Eternity, the Advantages of your present State.* Though you are at many disadvantages with respect to the publick Ordinances, yet you have many wondrous and most happy Priviledge, which Spiritual Wisdom would make no small improvement of. Oh what a mercy have you that you may serve God while you will in your Families! That you may be as much as you will with God in secret Prayer, and holy Meditation, and Self-examination! I beseech you consider

conſider what a Bleſſing you have above others, that have your Health, and a Competency of the Comforts of this life, and are free from thoſe continual pains, or Heart-eating Cares, that others are diſabled by, from looking after God and their Souls, as you may do. Oh conſider what a bleſſed Seed-time you have for Eternity! Now be wiſe and improve your happy Seaſon, your day of Grace. Prepare for Death, make all ſure: Preſs on towards the Mark, lay up in ſtore for your ſelves a good Foundation againſt the time to come. In the morning ſow your Seed, and in the Evening withdraw not your Hand. Treaſure up much in Heaven: What profit is it that you have more than others? more Liberty, more Comfort, more Health, more Wealth, than others? except you love God more, and ſerve him better than others. Now ply your Work, and diſpatch your Buſineſs, ſo as that you may have nothing to trouble You upon your Death-Beds.

2. *To Conſider alſo the Temptations, and Diſadvantages of your State.* Study to know your own weakneſſes, and where your danger lies that you may obviate Satan, and prevent your miſcarrying: There is no Condition but hath its Snares. See that you acquaint your ſelves with his Devices, leaſt you be beguiled by him, and caught in his Trap through your own unwarineſs. You that are well Provided for in the World, had need to watch your ſelves, leaſt you fall in love with preſent things, leaſt you be lifted up, leaſt you truſt in thoſe Carnal props, and put confidence in the Creatures, leaſt you warp, and decline, and baulk your duties through Carnal fear, and the deſire of preſerving your Eſtates. You that have little in the World, are not without your temptations neither: Oh take heed of Envying others Proſperity, of murmuring and diſcontent, of diffidence and diſtruſtfullneſs, of uſing indirect means to help your ſelves: Be ſure You make not the Worlds preſſures upon you, an excuſe from your daily ſerving of God in your Families, and in ſecret. Set this down as your Rule, and unchangeable Reſolution, that God and your Souls and your Families ſhall be looked duly and continually after, go the world which way it will. Conſider what ſins your Tempers, Relations, Callings, do moſt expoſe you to. Be not ſtrangers to your ſelves. Prove your ſelves upright in keeping from your Iniquities.

3. To

3. *To converse often with your Dust.* Brethren we are going, we are going, the Grave waiteth for us: Oh forget not that Corruption is your Father, and the Worm your Mother, and your Sister. These are your poor kindred that you must shortly dwell with, when you come to your long home: Remember the days of Darkness which shall be many. Take every day some serious turns with Death. Think where you shall be a few days and nights hence, happy he that knew what to morrow meant for twenty Years together. Believe it, you will find it no little thing to die. Think often how you are provided, how you should receive the Sentence of Death. Were you never within sight of Death? How did it look? What did you wish for most at that time? What did then trouble you most? Oh mark these things, and live according. Often ask your hearts, VVhat if God should this night require my Soul?

4. *To serve your Generation with your might while you have time.* You have but a very little time to bring God any Glory here, or to do your Friends any good; now up and be doing. Now or never live in the deep and constant sense of the very little time that you have for this world, and the great work you have to do. You are going whence You shall not return. There's no After-Game to be plaid. VVhat! But one cast for Eternity, and will you not be careful to throw that well?

Most dearly Beloved, I covet after your furtherance in Mortification, and growth in Grace. And Oh that I could but represent Death to you, as shortly it will shew it self: Or could but open a VVindow into Eternity to You: How effectually would this do the work. Then the Cripple would fling away his Crutches, and betake himself to his Legs: Then the slothfull would pluck his Hand out of his Bosome, and shake off his Excuses, and be night and day at his work. Then the *Laodicean* would be recovered from his benumed frame; then we should have no Halving in Religion, no lazy wishing and complaining; but men would ply the Oars to purpose, and sweat at their work.

But Oh unhappy man, how powerfully hath the world bewitched thee! How miserably hath Sin unmaned thee. that thou shouldst look no farther than thou canst see, and

to

to be taken up with preſent things, and forget ſo momentous concernments as are before thee?

But you my Brethren, lift up your ſelves above the objects of ſenſe: may you be men for eternity, and carry it like theſe that ſeek for glory, honour, and immortality. I am apt to be too long with you: I commend you to Divine Grace; my deareſt loves among you, I am

Yours in the Bonds of the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus,

JOS. ALLEINE.

From the common Goale at Juelcheſter, *March* 5. 1665.

LETTER. XXV.

To the loving and moſt beloved People, the Servants of God in Taunton, *Grace and Peace.*

Moſt dearly Beloved,

Although I am forced at the preſent, to be at a diſtance from you, yet I would not have you ignorant, that the dear remembrance of you is always freſh with me, and the care of your eternal welfare is always living upon my heart. Therefore as my beloved Friends I warn you, and ceaſe not to ſtir you up by way of remembrance, being jealous for you with a Godly jealouſie, that no man take your Crown. My dearly Beloved, I know you have many enemies, and above all, I fear your boſom Enemies: and as the Watchman of the Lord, I give you careful warning, and exhort you all not to be high-minded, but fear. Bleſſed is the man that feareth always. Look diligently, leſt any of you fail of the Grace of God. You have made much and long Profeſſion of the Name of Jeſus Chriſt: Oh look to your foundations, ſee upon what ground you ſtand. Look to your ſincerity. You muſt every one of you ſtand ſhortly before the Judgement

ment Seat of Christ, and be tried for your lives: Oh, try your selves throughly first. 'Tis easie to mistake Education for Regeneration, and common Conviction and Illumination for Conversion, and a partial Reformation and external Obedience, for true Sanctification. Therefore I beseech you every one, to examine whether you are in the Faith. Prove your own selves. Tell not me, you hope you are sincere, you hope you shall go to Heaven: Never put it off with hopes, but pray, and try, and search, till you are able to say, yea, and know you are passed from death to life, and that you know you have a Building, not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.

Suppose I should ask you one by one, where are your Evidences for Heaven? Could you make out your claim? can you bring me Scripture-proof? can you shew me the marks of the Lord Jesus? what mean you to live at uncertainties? Brethren, it is an intollerable ignorance for any of you in these days of glorious light, not to be able to tell the distinguishing marks of a sound believer. And it is intollerable carelesness of your everlasting welfare, if you do not bring your selves to the Trial by these marks. What are your hands filled with Books, and your ears filled with Sermons, that tell you so plainly from the Word of God, how you shall know whether you are in Christ, and are you still to seek? Oh, stir up your own selves. Take heed, lest a Promise being left of entring into his rest, any of you fall short of it at last by unbelief. You are a professing People, you pray, and you hear, and you run upon some Adventures for Jesus Christ: But, O look to your sincerity. Look to your Principles, look to your ends, else you may lose all at last. Examine, not only what is done, but whence 'tis done, look to the root as well as to the Fruit. Eye not only your Actions, but your aims. Remember what a strict and severy eye you are under. The Lord Jesus makes strict observation upon all your works and ways. He observes who of you be fruitful, and who be barren and unprofitable. He knows who of you be thriving and who be declining. He observes who be warm, and who lukewarm: who be sound Christians, and who of you have only a name to live.

Return, O backsliding Christians, you have lost your former

convictions, and loſt your former Affections. You are grown remiſs in your watch, and your Zeal is turned into a kind of indifferencie, and your diligence into negligence. Your care is turned into ſecurity, and your tenderneſs into ſenſeleſsneſs. Oh, your caſe is dangerous. The Lord Jeſus hath a great controverſie with you. Oh, remember whence you are fallen, and repent, and do your firſt works. Strengthen the things that remain, and are ready to die. Oh, rub and chafe your ſwooning ſouls, and ply them with warm applications, and rouſing conſiderations, till they recover their former heat. And know ye from the Lord, that the backſliders in heart ſhall be filled with his own ways.

Oh ye barren and fruitleſs trees: behold the Axe is lifted up to fell you to the ground, except you bring forth fruits, and thoſe worthy of Repentance. May not Chriſt ſay to ſome among you, *Behold theſe three years have I come, ſeeking fruit, and finding none?* How is it then that you read not the Sentence paſſed on the fruitleſs Tree? O ſleepy Profeſſors, how long will you drive on in this heavy courſe? how long will you continue in an unprofitable and cuſtomary profeſſion? would you be the joy of our Lord, why know ye, that the thriving Plant is the Maſters praiſe, and his hearts delight. Chriſtians, put on, preſs towards the Mark, be adding to your Faith, Virtue; and to virtue, knowledge, *&c.* See that you grow extenſively, in being abundant in all ſorts of good works. Be pitiful, be courteous, gentle, eaſily to be entreated. Be ſlow to anger, ſoon reconciled. Be patient, be ye temperate, be ye chearful. Study not every one onely his own things, but the good of his Neighbor. Think it not enough to look to your own ſouls, but watch for other ſouls. Pray for them, warn them, be kind to them, ſtudy to oblige them, that by any means you may win them, and gain their ſouls.

Labour to grow intenſively, to do better the things that you did before, to be more fervent in Prayer, more free and willing in all the ways of the Lord, to hear with more profit, to examine your ſelves more thorowly, to mind Heaven more frequently than heretofore.

And you, O carnal and unſound Profeſſors, that reckon your ſelves to be in Chriſt, but are not new Creatures; that becauſe you have the good opinion of the Godly, and are outwardly con-

conformable to the ways of God, perſwade your ſelves you are in a good condition, although your hearts have not yet to this day been renewed: O repent ſpeedily. Repent, and be converted. What though we cannot diſtinguiſh the Tares from the Wheat? yet the Lord of the Harveſt can. Chriſt will find you out, and condemn you for rotten and unſound, unleſs you be ſoundly renewed by repentance, and effectually changed by converting Grace.

Brethren, I fervently wiſh your Salvation, and to this, while I am able, I ſhall bend my ardent endeavours, I am now taking advice for my health, and hope in ſome few Weeks to be reſtored to you. In the mean time I commend me to your Prayers, and you to the grace of God, remaining.

Yours in the Lord Jeſus,

Dorcheſter, July 7th. 1666.

JOS. ALLEINE.

LETTER XXVI.

[The Character and priviledges of true Believers.]

To the loving and moſt beloved People, the Servants of God in Taunton, *Grace and Peace.*

Moſt Dearly Beloved,

I Longed to hear of your Welfare, but by reaſon of the Carryers intermitting his journeys, could not till now obtain my deſires, neither had I opportunity till the laſt week of writing to you. I rejoyce to hear by Mr. *Ford*, of Gods continual goodneſs towards you; he is your Shepherd, and therefore it is that you do not want. Me you have not alwaies, but he is ever with you, his Rod and his Staff ſhall comfort you; Nay, more then all this, you may hence conclude comfortably for all times, yea, for the whole Eternity to come. Surely Goodneſs and Mercy ſhall follow you all the daies of your lives, and you ſhall dwell in the Houſe of the Lord for ever.

In this, my dear Brethren, in this rejoyce, and again I

 ſay

say rejoyce, that God is ingaged in so near and so sweet relation to you. Doubtless your Souls shall lodge in goodness, and be provided for carefully, and lie down in everlasting safety, that have the Almighty for our Shepherd. Blessed are the Flock of his hands, and the Sheep of his Pasture, happy is the People that is in such a case.

But who are Christs Sheep?

Not all Professors, *I* beseech you take heed how you rest in Profession. *It* is not *Profession*, but *Conversion* that turns a man from a Swine to a Sheep. Let none of you be deceived, nor flatter your selves, that because you bear the name of Christians, and do many things, and have escaped the open gross pollutions of the VVorld, therefore you are surely among the number of Christs true Sheep. All this you may attain to, and yet be but washed Swine; here must be an inward deep and thorow and universal Change upon your Natures, Dispositions, Inclinations, or else you are not Christs Sheep.

In a word, *If* you will be put out of doubt whether you are his sheep or not, you must trie it by this certain Mark that Christ sets upon all his Sheep, even your *Sanctification*, you that will stand to the trial, answer me truly and deliberately to these Questions. Do you hate every sin as the sheep doth the Mire? Do you regard no *I*niquity in your hearts? Do you strive against, and oppose all sin, though it may seem never so necessary, never so natural to you, or have you not your secret haunts of evil? For every Swine will have his swill. Do you abstain from sin out of fear, or out of dislike? Are you at peace with no sin, or do you not hide some iniquity as a sweet morsel under your Tongue? Is there not some practice that you are not willing to know is a sin for fear you should be forced to leave it? Do you love the Commandment that forbids your sin, or do you not wish it out of the Bible, as that evil man wished God had never made the Seventh Commandment? Again, how do you stand affected towards Holiness? Do you love it? Do you choose it? Do you hunger and thirst after it, & desire it more than any Temporal good? Have you chosen the way of Gods Precepts, and had rather live holily than be allowed to live in your sins? Do You in your very hearts prefer a Godly strict

Life

Life in communion with and conformity to God, before the greateſt proſperity of the World? do you choſe Holineſs, not out of bare neceſſity, becauſe you cannot go to Heaven without it, but out of *love* to it, and from a deep ſenſe that you have of the ſurpaſſing excellency, and lovelineſs, and beauty of it? If it be thus with you, you are the perſons that the Lord Jeſus hath marked for his Sheep.

And now, come ye bleſſed, all that have this mark upon you, come and underſtand your happineſs; you are marked out for preſervation, and let it go how it will with the reſt; that I know, it ſhall go well with you that fear the Lord, that fear before him. You are the ſeparated ones, the ſealed ones, upon whom the Angel hath ſet the Seal of the Living God; and ſo you are redeemed unto God from among men, being the firſt fruits unto God, and unto the Lamb, and have your Fathers Name written in your Fore-heads.

Hear, O beloved Flock, I may give you the ſalutation of the Angels, *Hail, you are highly favoured of the Lord, Bleſſed are you among men*; though you are but poor and deſpiſed, and like little *Benjamin* among the thouſands of *Judah*; you carry away the bleſſing and the priviledge from all the reſt. God hath done more for the leaſt of you than for the whole World of Mankind beſides, put all their mercies together. *Fear not little Flock, it is your Fathers good pleaſure to give you the Kingdom. Bleſſed are you of the Lord, for yours is the Kingdom of Heaven.* All that the Scripture ſpeaks of that Kingdom of Glory, that Kingdom of Peace, of Righteouſneſs, that Everlaſting Kingdom, It ſpeaks it all to you. Behold your Inheritance, ſee that you believe. What know you not your own ſelves? you are the Sons of God, Inheritours of the Kingdom of Heaven, Joint Heirs with Chriſt the Lord of Glory. Do you believe this? Take heed you make not God a Lyar: his Word is nigh you: have you not the Writings in your hands? Do I ſpeak any thing but what God hath ſpoken? Shall I tell you of the thing which ſhall be hereafter? Why thus it ſhall be. The Son of man ſhall come in his Glory, and all his holy Angels with him: Then ſhall he ſit upon the Throne of his Glory, and he ſhall ſeparate you as a Shepherd divideth the Sheep from the Goats, and he ſhall ſet you at his own right hand, Then ſhall the

King say, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you.*

Do you believe yet? Do you throughly believe? If so, then my work is done, then I need not bid you *Rejoyce*, nor bid you be *thankful*; only *believe*. Do this and do all. *Believe* and joy *will rejoyce* with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. *Believe* and you will be *fruitful*, and shew your Faith by your works. *Believe* and you will *Love*, for Faith worketh by love. In a word, keep these things upon your hearts by daily and lively consideration, and this will bring Heaven into your souls, and ingage you to all manner of holy conversation, and Godliness. This will mortifie you to the World, the grand enemy which I advise, nay, I charge you to beware of. When *Saul* had gotten his Kingdom, he left off taking care for the Asses. O remember yours is the Kingdom: what are you the better that you have all this in your Bibles, if you do not weigh it by frequent and serious consideration, and ponder these sayings in your hearts. Beloved, I have written these things to *you* that your joy may be full. And now Peace I leave with *you*, I am Christs Embassador to you, an Embassador of Peace; his Peace I pronounce unto you; In his Name I bless you. Farewel in the Lord, I am

The fervent well-willer of your Souls

Devises, *June* 29. 1666.

JOS. ALLEINE

LETTER XXVII.

[Of the Second coming of Christ.]

To the Faithful, and Beloved, the Servants of God in Taunton, *Grace and Peace.*

Loving and most dearly Beloved,

THough I trust my Bonds do preach to you, yet methinks that doth not suffice me, but the conscience of my du-

ty, and the workings of my heart towards you, are ſtill calling upon me to ſtir you up by way of remembrance, notwithſtanding you know and be eſtabliſhed in the preſent Truth. And if *Paul* do call upon ſo great an Evangeliſt as *Timothy*, to *Remember that Jeſus was raiſed from the dead according to the Goſpel*, why ſhould not I be often calling upon my ſelf, and upon you, my dearly Beloved, to remember and meditate upon, and cloſely apply the great and weighty Truths of the Goſpel, which you have already received? and in truth, I perceive in *my ſelf and you* another manner of heat and warmth in the inſiſting upon the *plaineſt principles* of Chriſtianity, and the ſetting *them* home upon *mine own heart and yours*, than in dwelling upon any more *abſtruſe Speculations*, in the cleareſt handling of which, the Preacher may ſeem to be too much like the winter nights, very bright, but very cold.

But now, my Brethren, I ſhall not with *Paul* call upon you ſo much to remember the reſurrection of Chriſt, as the *Return* of Chriſt: *Behold, He cometh in the Clouds, and every Eye ſhall ſee him*; Your eyes and mine eyes: and all the Tribes of the Earth ſhall mourn becauſe of him: But we ſhall lift up our heads, becauſe the Day of our Redemption draweth nigh: this is the day I look for, and wait for, and have laid up all my hopes in. If the Lord return not, I profeſs my ſelf undone, my Preaching is vain, and my ſuffering is vain, and the bottom in which I have intruſted all my hopes is for ever miſcarried. But I know whom I have truſted: We are built upon the foundation of that ſure Word, we are not built upon the ſand of Mortality. Nor do we run ſo as uncertainly, but the Word of the Lord abideth for ever, upon which Word do we hope; How fully doth this Word aſſure us that this ſame Jeſus that is gone up into Heaven ſhall ſo return, and that he ſhall appear the ſecond time unto Salvation, to them that look for him. Oh, how ſure is the thing! how near is the time! how glorious will his appearing be!

The thing is ſure, the Day is ſet, God hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the World by that man whom he

 hath

hath ordained; the manner of it is revealed, *Behold the Lord cometh with ten thouſand of his Saints:* The Attendants are appointed and nominated. *The Son of Man ſhall come in his Glory, and all his holy Angels with him.* The thing you ſee is eſtabliſhed, and every circumſtance is determined. How ſweet are the words that dropped from the precious Lips of our departing Lord! What generous Cordials hath he left us in his parting Sermons, and his laſt Prayer! and yet of all the reſt thoſe are the ſweeteſt, *I will come again and receive you to my ſelf, that where I am, there you may be alſo.* What need you any further witneſs: you have heard him your ſelves, aſſuring you of his return. Doubtleſs he cannot deceive you, you have not only known, but ſeen and felt the truth of his promiſes.

And will he come? tremble then ye ſinners, triumph ye Saints, clap your hands all ye that look for the conſolation of *Iſrael.* O ſinners, where will you then appear? how will you look upon him whom you have pierced; whom you have perſecuted? whoſe great Salvation you have neglected and deſpiſed? Wo unto you that ever you were born, unleſs you ſhould then be found to be *New-born.*

But you, O Children of the moſt high, how will you forget your travel, and be melted into joy. This is he in whom you have believed; whom having not ſeen ye loved. But how will love and joy be working (if I may ſo ſpeak) with pangs unutterable, when you ſhall ſee him, and hear his ſweet voice commending, applauding, approving of you, and owning you by name before all the World. Brethren, thus it muſt be, the Lord hath ſpoken it. See that you ſtagger not at the Promiſe, but give Glory to God by believing.

Again, the time is near, *Yet a little while, and he that ſhall come will come. Behold, I come quickly,* ſaith he: And again, *The Lord is at hand:* Sure you are, that death cannot be far off. O Chriſtian, thou doſt not know but the next year, nay, poſſibly the next week, thou mayeſt be in Heaven. Chriſt will not long endure thine abſence, but will have thee up to him till the time of his general appearing; when he will take us up altogether, and ſo we ſhall be ever with the Lord.

Soul,

Soul, believeſt thou this? If thou doſt indeed, what remains but that thou ſhouldeſt live a life of love and praiſe; ſtudying to do all the good thou canſt till thou come to Heaven; and waiting all the days of thine appointed time till thy change ſhall come. O my Soul, look out and long. O my Brethren, be you as the Mother of *Siſera*, looking out at the Windows, and watching at the Latices, ſaying, why are his Chariot-wheels ſo long a coming. Though the time till you ſhall ſee him be but very ſhort, yet love and longing make it ſeem tedious.

My Beloved, comfort your hearts with theſe Words: look upon theſe things as the greateſt reallities, and let your affections be anſwerable to your expectations. I would not have told you theſe things, unleſs I had believed them: for it is for this hope that I am bound with this Chain. The bleſſing of the Holy Trinity be upon you, I am yours and will be. The God of Peace be with you, I reſt

Your Embaſſador in Bonds,

JOS. ALLEINE.

From the Priſon at Juelcheſter,
Auguſt 5. 1663.

LETTER XXVIII.

[Of the Love of Chriſt.]

To his moſt endeared Friends, the ſervants of God in Taunton, *Salvation.*

Moſt dearly Beloved,

METhinks my Breſts are not eaſie, unleſs I do let them forth unto you. Methings there is ſomething ſtill to do, and my Weeks work is not ended, unleſs I have given my Soul vent, and imparted ſomething to the Beloved flock that

that I have left behind And Oh, that my Letters in my abſence might be uſeful to you! Aſſuredly it is my joy to ſerve you, and my love to you is without diſſimulation: witneſs my twice loſt liberties, and my impaired health, all which I might have preſerved, had it not been for my readineſs to miniſter to you.

But what do I ſpeak of my love? it is the ſenſe of the infinite love of God your Father that I would have to dwell upon you. Forget me, ſo you remember him. Let me be very little, ſo he be very lovely in your eyes. Let him be as the Bucket that goes up, though I be as the Bucket that goes down. Bury me, ſo that you do but ſet the Lord always before you. Let my name be written in the duſt, ſo his Name be written deep up all your Souls

O Lord, I am thy Servant, truly I am thy ſervant, Glorifie thine own Name by me, and thou ſhalt have my hand to it, that I will be content to be hid in obſcurity, and to diſappear through the overcoming luſtre and brightneſs of thy Glory.

Brethren, underſtand mine Office, I Preach not my ſelf, but the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and my ſelf your Servant for Jeſus ſake. Give him your hearts, and I have my Errand I am but the Friend of the Bridegroom, and my buſineſs is, but to give you to underſtand his love, and to gain your hearts unto him. He is an Object worthy of my Commendations, and of your affections. His Love is worth the writing of, and worth the thinking of, and worth the ſpeaking of. O my Brethren, never forget, *I* beſeech you, how he loveth you. He is in Heaven, and you are on Earth; he is in Glory and you in Rags; he is in the ſhining Throne, and you in dirty fleſh, and yet he loveth you. His heart is infinitely tender of you, even now while he is at the right hand of the Majeſty on High. How feelingly doth he cry out at the hurt of his poor Members on Earth? *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me!* Oh, of what quick ſenſe is the ſenſe of our dear Lord unto us! when we are touched on Earth he feels it in Heaven.

Brethren, Chriſt is real in all that he ſpeaks unto you: He is not like a flouriſhing Lover, who fills up his Letters with Rhetorick, and hath more care of the dreſs of his Speech, than

than of the Truth. Who ever gave demonſtration of the reallity of his love at ſo dear a rate as Chriſt hath done? Men do not uſe to die in jeſt: Who will impoveriſh himſelf to enrich his Friend? and diveſt himſelf of his honour to advance him? and debaſe himſelf to admiration below his own degree to contract affinity with him? and all this but to make him believe that he loves him.

Brethren, poſſeſs your very hearts with this, that Chriſts love doth go out with infinite dearneſs towards you. Even now while he is in all his Glory, he earneſtly remembers you ſtill. This is the High Prieſt that now is entred into the Holy of Holies, doth bear your names particularly, remembring every poor believer by name. He bears your names, but where? upon his Breſt-plate, upon his heart, ſaith the Text, *Exod.* 28. 29. Ah Chriſtians, I may ſalute you as the Angel did *Mary*, *Hail you that are highly favoured: Bleſſed are you among men.* Sure your Lot is fallen in an happy place; what in the boſom of Chriſt? yea, and verily you may believe, and doubt not. I may apply that of *Gabriel*, *O Daniel, thou art greatly beloved*, unto you; you are beloved indeed, to have your Names written upon the very heart of Chriſt now he is in Glory.

Oh, let his *Name* be written then on *your* hearts. Do not write his Name in the Sand, when he hath written yours upon his *own Breſt!* Do not forget him who hath taken ſuch care, that while he is, he may never forget you, having recorded your names not onely on his *Book*, but on his *Fleſh*, and ſet you as a Seal upon his heart. He hath you upon his heart, but why? For a memorial before the Lord continually, ſo ſaith the Text. Beloved, your Lord is ſo far from forgetting you in all his Greatneſs and Glory, that he is gone into Heaven on purpoſe, there to preſent you before the Lord, that you may be always in remembrance before him O Beloved, Glory, yea, and Triumph in his love; Doubtleſs it muſt go well with us. Who ſhall condemn? It is Chriſt that died, and roſe again, and is now making Interceſſion. His intereſt is potent. He is always preſent. Our Advocate is never out of Court. Never did cauſe miſcarry in his hand. Truſt you ſafely in him. Happy is that man for whom he ſhall undertake to ſpeak.

Oh,

Oh, the Riches of Christs love! he did not think it enough to die for you. His love and care doth not end with his natural life on Earth, but he ever liveth to make Intercession for us. His love is like his life, ever, ever: knowing no remission in degree, nor intermission of time, no cessation of working, but is ever, ever, in motion towards us.

But when shall I end, if I suffer my soul to run out its length, and my running Pen te enlarge according to the demensions of this boundless Field of Divine Love? If the Pens of all the World were imployed to write Volumes of love, if the tongues of all the living were exercised in nothing else but talking of this love; If all the Hearts that be were made up of love; and all the powers and affections of the mind were turned into one, to wit the power of love, yet this were no less than infinitely too little, either to conceive, or to express the greatness of Christs love.

O my dearly beloved, may your souls be swallowed up in this love. Think, and think while you will, you can never think how much you are beloved. See that ye love again by way of *Gratitude*, though not of *Requital*: what though your souls be but narrow, and your powers but little, yet love him with all you have. Love him with all your hearts, and all your strength. To the Meditations, and to the Embraces of Divine love I leave you, thinking it now not worth while to tell you of my Love, Remaining

Yours in the bonds of your most dear Lord Jesus,

JOS. ALLEINE.

August 11. 1665.

LET-

LETTER. XXIX.

[Warning to Professors of their Danger.]

To the Beloved People, the Inhabitants of the Town of Taunton, *Grace and Peace.*

Most dear Friends,

MY top joy is, that my beloved is mine and I am his: but next to that I have no joy so great as that you are mine and I am yours, and you are Christs. My Relation to Christ is above all; he is my life and my peace, my riches, and my righteousness: he is my hope and my strength, and mine Inheritance, and my rejoycing: In him will I please my self for ever, and in him will I glory. I esteem my self most happy and rich, and safe in him, though of my self I am nothing. In him I may boast without Pride, and glory without vanity. Here is no danger of being over much *pleased*; neither can the Christian exceed his bounds in overvaluing his own riches, and happiness in Christ. I am greatly pleased with the Lot that is fallen to me: the Lord hath dealt bountifully with me, and none shall stop this my confidence of boasting in Christ. But as my lot in him is above all, so I will assure you, it is no small content to me, that my lot is fallen with you. And though many difficulties have fallen to my lot among you (for I have broken my health and lost my liberty once and again, for your sakes) yet none of these things move me. I wish nothing more then to spend and to be spent upon the service of your Faith. I bless the Lord for it as an invalnable mercy, that ever he called me to be an Embassador of the Lord Jesus Christ to you-wards. In this station I desire to approve my self to him, and that I am withdrawn from my Work for a season, it is but that I may return to you refreshed, and inabled for my work among you. You may not think that I have forgotten you, and consulted my own ease and pleasure: but if God prosper my intentions, I shall be found to have been daily serving you in this retirement. I will assure you, I am very

tender

tender of preſerving all that little ſtrength that God doth add to me entirely for your ſakes: being reſolved not ſo much as once to broach the Veſſel till I draw forth to you. I bleſs the Lord, I am in great tranquility here in this Town, and walk up & down the Corporation without any Queſtioning me. Only it hath pleaſed the Lord to add to my Affliction ſince my coming, by taking away my dear Father, the day of whoſe glorious Tranſlation was the day after my arriving here. But I bleſs the Lord, I do believe and expect the return of the Redeemer with all his Saints, and the moſt glorious Reſurrection of my own dead Body with all Believers: and this makes me to reſt in Hope, and fills me with unſpeakle more Joy than the death of my ſelf or any other Saint can with grief. And now *I* make it my buſineſs to be rendred ſerviceable to you; and do by this, return you my hearty thanks for your earneſt Prayers and Interceſſions to God in my behalf, for it is he that muſt do the Cure: I ſeem to my ſelf to be retired to this place, as a Veſſel rent and ſhatter'd and torn in the Service, that it come to recruit in the *Harbour*: And here *I* am as it were rigging, and repairing, and Victualling to put forth again in the Service: which I ſhall do with the firſt Wind, as ſoon as I am ready. What is my life unleſs *I* am ſerviceable? And though I muſt for the preſent forbear my wonted Labour, yet *I* ſhall not ceaſe to exhort you, and call upon you while I am abſent from you, to ſtand faſt, and to grow up in your holy Faith.

Be warned, my dearly Beloved, that you fall not upon thoſe dangerous Rocks upon which ſo many Profeſſors have been ſplit.

There are three things which I beſeech you carefully to beware of.

Firſt, Leſt while Chriſt is in your mouths, the world run away with your hearts: There is many a ſeeming Profeſſor that will be found a meer Idolater? Many a Soul goes down to *Hell* in this ſin, in the midſt of his Profeſſion, and never diſcerns it till it be too late. Remember, I beſeech You, that the *Oxen*, the Farm, Wife, Merchandize, all of them lawful Comforts, did effectually keep men from a ſound and ſaving cloſing with Chriſt, as the vileſt luſts of the worſt of men. Whatever you find your hearts very much *pleaſed* in, and

ard in love with, among theſe earthly Comforts, ſet a mark upon that thing, and remember that there lies your greateſt danger. What you love moſt, you muſt fear moſt; and think often with your ſelves, This, if any thing is like to be my ruine. O the multitudes of Profeſſors that periſh for ever, by the ſecret hand of this mortal Enemy, *I* mean the overvaluing of Earthly things. The hearers compared to the thorny Ground, did not openly fall away and caſt off their Profeſſion, as the ſtony ground did; but while others withered away, the blade of Profeſſion was as green and freſh as ever; and yet their inordinate affection to the things of this life, did ſecretly undo all at laſt. Little do moſt Profeſſors think of this, while they pleaſe themſelves in their eſtates, while they delight themſelves ſo freely in their Children, in their Wives, in their habitations and poſſeſſions; that theſe be the things that are like to undo them for ever. How little is that Scripture thought of, which ſpeaks ſo dreadfully to worldly Profeſſors; *Love not the World, for if any man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him.* Are there not many among us, who though they do keep up Prayer, and other holy Duties; yet the ſtrength and vigour of their hearts goeth out after earthly things? And theſe are their chief care and their chief joy. Such muſt know, that they are none of Chriſts, and they were better to underſtand it now, and ſeek to be renewed by Repentance, then hereafter when there ſhall be no place for Repentance.

2. *Leſt while Iniquity doth abound, your love to Chriſt doth wax cold.* Remember what an Abomination *Laodicea* was to Chriſt becauſe ſhe grew ſo luke-warm; and what a controverſie he had with *Epheſus*, a ſound Church, becauſe ſhe did but ſlacken and grow more remiſs in her love. A friend is born for adverſity; and now is the time, if you will prove the ſincerity of your love and friendſhip to Jeſus Chriſt, by following him zealouſly, reſolvedly, fully, now he is more rejected and oppoſed.

Thirdly, *Leſt you keep up a barren and fruitleſs Profeſſion, without Progreſſion:* See to it my Brethren, that you be not onely Profeſſors, but proficients: Many Profeſſors think all is well becauſe they keep on in the exerciſes of Religion; but alas! You may keep on praying, and hearing all the Week long, and yet be not one jot the further. Many there

are

are that keep going, but it is like the Horſe in the Mill, that is going all day, but yet is no further than when he firſt began. Nay, it oft times happens in the Trade of Religion, as it doth in trading in the World, where many keep on in trading ſtill, till for want of care and caution, and examining their accounts whether they go forward or backward, they trade themſelves out of all. Oh, look to it my Brethren, that none of you reſt in the doing of duties, but examine what comes of them. Otherwiſe as you may trade your ſelves into Poverty, ſo you may hear and pray your ſelves into hardneſs of heart, and deſperate ſecurity, and formality. This was the very caſe of wretched *Laodicia*, who kept up the trade of religious duties, and verily thought that all was well, becauſe the trade ſtill went on, and that ſhe was increaſed in ſpiritual goods, and in a gaining way: but when her accounts were caſt up at laſt, all comes to nothing, and ends in wretchedneſs, poverty, and nakedneſs. Moſt dear Brethren, I wiſh and pray for the proſperity of you all: but above all, I wiſh your Souls proſperity, with which, after my moſt dear Loves to you all, having already exceeded the bounds of an Epiſtle, I commend you to the living God, Remaining

Your fervent well wiſher and Embaſſador in Chriſt,

JOS. ALLEINE

Deviſes, *June* 22. 1666.

LETTER. XXX.

[An Admiration of the Love of God.]

To the moſt Loving, and beſt Beloved, the ſervants of God in Taunton, *Salvation.*

My moſt dear Friends,

I Love you, and long for you in the Lord, and I am weary with forbearing that good and bleſſed work that the Lord

Lerd hath committed to me, for the furtherance of your Salvation. How long Lord, how long ſhall I dwell in ſilence! How long ſhall my Tongue cleave to the Roof of my Mouth! When will God open my Lips, that I may ſtand up and praiſe him? But it is my Fathers good pleaſure yet to keep me in a total diſability of publiſhing his Name among you; unto him my Soul ſhall patiently ſubſcribe. *I* may not, *I* cannot complain that he is hard to me, or uſeth me with Rigour: *I* am full of the Mercies of the Lord, yea, Brimful and running over, And ſhall I complain? Far be it from me.

But though I may not murmur, methinks *I* may mourn a little, and ſit down and wiſh, O if I may not have a Tongue to ſpeak, would I had but Hands to Write, that I might from my Pen drop ſome heavenly Councels to my Beloved People. Methinks my feeble Fingers do even Itch to Write unto you, but it cannot be, alas my right-hand ſeems to have forgot her cunning, and hath much ado with trembling to lift the Bread unto my Mouth. Do you think you ſhould have had ſo little to ſhew under my Hand, to bear Witneſs of my Care for You, and love to you if God had not ſhook my Pen as it were out of my Hand? But all that he doth is done well, and wiſely, and therefore I ſubmit. I have purpoſed to borrow Hands wherewith to write unto my Beloved, rather then to be ſilent any longer.

But where ſhall I begin, or when ſhould I end? If *I* think to ſpeak of the Mercies of God towards me, or mine enlarged affections towards you, methinks I feel already how ſtrait this Paper is like to be, and how inſignificant my Expreſſions will be found, and how inſufficient all that I can ſay will prove at laſt to utter what I have to tell you; but ſhall I ſay nothing becauſe I cannot utter all, this muſt not be neither.

Come then all ye that fear the Lord, come and I well tell you what he hath done for my Soul. O help me to love that precious Name of his, which is above all my Praiſes: O love the Lord all ye his Saints, and fear before him! magnifie the Lord with me, and let us exalt his Name together! he hath remembred my low eſtate, becauſe his Mercy endureth for ever. O bleſſed be you of the Lord, my dearly Be-

lovee, O thrice bleſſed may you be for all your remembrances of me before the Lord, you have wreſtled with the Lord for me, you have wreſtled me out of the very Jaws of Death it ſelf: O the ſtrength of Prayer! Surely it is ſtronger than death. See that you even honour the power and prevalency of Prayer: Oh be in love with Prayer, and have high and venerable thoughts of it. What diſtreſſes, diſeaſes. Deaths can ſtand before it? Surely I live by Prayer, Prayer hath given a Reſurrection to this Body of mine, when Phyſicians, and friends had given up their hopes.

Ah my dearly Beloved, methinks it delights me to tell the ſtory of your love, how much more of the love of God towards me. I have not forgotten, O my dearly Beloved, I have not forgotten your tender love in all my diſtreſſes. I remember your kindneſs to me in my Bonds, when once and again I was delivered up to a Priſon for your ſakes. I remember with much delight, how you refreſhed and comforted me in my Tribulations, how open your hearts were, and your hands were not ſtraightned neither, for I was in want of nothing I may not, I muſt not forget what painful Journies you took to viſit me, when in places remote the hand of the Lord had touched me, and though my long ſickneſs almoſt incredible expenſive to me, yet your Supplies did not a little lighten my Burthen.

And though I put it laſt, yet I do not mind it leaſt, that you have been ſo ready in returning Praiſes to God in my behalf, your thankſgiving to God, my dear Brethren, do adminiſter abundant cauſe to me of my giving thanks unto you.

And now my heart methinks is big to tell you a little of my love to you, ſurely you are dear unto me; but though it be ſweet to tell the ſtory of love, yet in this I will reſtrain my ſelf For I fear leaſt as the wiſe man ſaith of the beginning of ſtrife, ſo I ſhould find of the beginning of love, that it is like the letting forth of the Water; and the rather I do forbear, becauſe I hope you have better Teſtimonies than Words, to bear witneſs here unto you.

But if I ſing the ſong of love, O let Divine Love overcarry the praiſe; I found my ſelf in ſtraights when I began to ſpeak of the natural love between my dear people, and an unworthy

thy Minister of Christ to them; and it seemed that all that I have said was much too little, but now I have to speak of the love God, it seems to be by far too much.

O infinite love never to be Comprehended, but ever to be admired, magnified, and adored by every Creature! O let my heart be filled, let my Mouth be filled, let my papers be filled ever, ever filled with the thankful Commemoration of this matchless love. O turn your eyes from other objects! O bury me in forgetfulness, and let my love be no more mentioned nor had in remembrance among you, so that you may be throughly possessed and inflamed with the love of God. This, my Beloved, this is that love which is ever to be commended, and extolled by you. See that you studie this love, fill your souls with wonder, and feast your souls with joy, and be ravished with rich contentment in this Divine Love: Take your daily walk, and lose your selves in the Field of Love: Drink, O Friends, yea drink abundantly, O Beloved, fear no excess. O that your souls may be drencht and drowned in the love of Christ, till you can every one say with the ravisht Spouse, *I am sick of love.* Marvel not that I wander here, and seem to forget the bounds of a Letter, this love obligeth me, yea, rather constraineth me. Who in all the Earth should admire and commend this love if I should not? I feel it, I taste it, the sweet savour thereof reviveth my soul, it is light to mine eyes, and life to mine heart; the warm Beams of this blessed Sun, O how have they comforted me, ravished, and refreshed me both in Body and Soul! my benumbed Limbs, my withered hands, my feeble knees, my bones quite naked of flesh do yet again revive through the quickning, healing, and raising influence of Divine Grace and Love. Now my own hands can feed me, and my own feet can bear me, my appetite is quick, my sleep comfortable, and God is pleased to give some increase continually though by insensible Degrees; and shall not I praise that love and grace that hath done all this for me? yea, what is this to all I have to tell you? My heart is enlarged, but I told you Paper could not hold what I have to speak of the goodness of the All-Gracious God, in which I live. I am forced to end, least you should not bear my length. My dearly Beloved, I send

my heart unto you, divide my love amongſt you all, and particularly tender it to your Reverend and Faithful Paſtour, whoſe preſence with you, and painfulneſs, and watchfulneſs over you, and Zeal and courage for you in ſo dangerous a time, is matter of my great Joy and Thankſgivings unto God. The grace of our Lord Jeſus be with you all. Fare you well in the Lord, I remain

Your unworthy Miniſter and fervent well-wiſher in the Lord,

JOS. ALLEINE.

LETTER XXXI.

To the moſt Beloved People, the Servants of God in Taunton, *Salvation.*

Moſt dearly Beloved and longed for, my Joy and Crown,

MY hearts deſire and Prayer for you is, that you may be ſaved. This is that which I have been Praying and ſtudying, and Preaching for theſe many *Years*: and this is the end of my Venturing, and Suffering, and Writing at this preſent time. God that knoweth all things, he knoweth that this is my wiſh; Oh that I could but come at their Souls! And that this is the prize and the gain that I run for, that I might win ſouls. I ſeek not other gifts, give me your hearts, let me but part between your ſins and you; ſuffer me but to ſave you; give me leave to carry you over to Jeſus Chriſt, and I will not ask you any more. I will ſerve you gladly, I will ſuffer for you thankfully, ſo I may but ſave you. Do not wonder why I follow you ſo preſſingly, why I call upon you ſo frequently; let not my importunity be grievous to you, all this is but to ſave you. Chriſt did not bethink his Blood, and ſhall I think my Breath, or Ink, too dear in order to your ſalvation? what pitie is it, that any of you ſhould miſ-

miſcarry at laſt, under the power of Ignorance, or by a prophane negligence, or a formal and lifeleſs profeſſion of ſtrict Godlineſs.

Beloved, I am afraid of you leſt (as to many of you) I have run in vain. I cannot but moſt thankfully acknowledge, that (conſidering the paucity of thoſe that are ſaved) there are not a few of you who are the joy of your Miniſters, and the Glory of Chriſt. But it cannot be diſſembled, that far the greater number give little ground to hope, that they are in the ſtate of Salvation. And muſt not this be a pinching thought to a compaſſionate Teacher, to think, that he cannot for his heart perſwade men, but that the moſt of them will wilfully throw away themſelves? Is it not a woful ſight, to behold the Devils driving a great part of our miſerable Flocks (as they did once the Herd of Swine, the Keepers themſelves amazed looking on.) I ſay, driving them violently down the hill, till they be choaked in the Water, and drowned irrecoverably in the Gulf of endleſs Perdition? Ah miſerable ſpectacle! What through the wilful blindneſs of ſome, what through the loſeneſs and ſenſuality of others, what through the halving, and Cold, and cuſtomary Religion of others, how great a number of our poor Flocks, is Satan like to carry utterly away from us, after all that hath been done to ſave them?

Yet I cannot but call after them. Hearken unto me, O ye Children. How long will ye love Vanity, and follow after leaſing, and truſt in lying Words? As the Lord liveth you are loſt, except you turn: Wherefore turn your ſelves and live ye. Ah how Mercy woeth you! How it waiteth to be gracious to you? Hear, O ſinners, hear. See you not how the merciful Saviour of the World ſtretcheth forth his hands all the day long, and ſpreadeth forth his Wings, and calleth you as a Hen doth her Chickens! hear you not the ſoundings of his Bowels? He had no need of you; Yet how do his compaſſions melt over periſhing ſinners? his heart is turned within him, and ſhall not this turn your hearts? his repentings are kindled together; and ſhall not this lead you to repentance? Behold, he ſtandeth at the door and knocketh. O man wilt thou keep Jeſus at the door, and lodge *Barrabas* in thy boſom? and prefer thy cruel Luſts before thy Compaſ-

 ſionate

ſionate Lord? Oh his melting love to ſinners! He calleth after them, *Iſa.* 55.1. He weepeth over them, *Luke* 19. 41, 42. He crieth to them, *Prov.* 1.21,22,23. How long ye ſimple ones, will you love ſimplicity? Will you not be made clean? When ſhall it once be? Why will you die? Turn you at my Reproof: Behold, I will pour out my Spirit upon you. Sinner, art thou not yet melted? Oh come in at his loving Calls, Come out from thy ſins; Touch the Scepter of Grace and live: Why ſhouldeſt thou be daſhed in pieces by his Iron Rod? Kiſs the Son: Why ſhouldſt thou periſh in the way? Set up Jeſus as thy King, leſt he count thee for his Enemy, becauſe thou wouldſt not that he ſhould Reign over thee, and ſo thou be called forth and ſlain before him. Oh how dreadful will this Caſe be, to periſh under the pittiful Eyes of his Mercy, and to die by the hand of a Saviour! Oh double hell, to have thy Redeemer become thine Executioner! And the hand that was ſo long ſtretched forth to ſave thee, to be now ſtretched forth to ſlay thee! And the merciful heart of Chriſt himſelf hardned againſt thee, ſo as that he ſhould call thee forth, and with his own hand hew thee in pieces, (as *Samuel* did *Agag* before the Lord.)

But *I* have been too too long in prefacing to what I intended forthwith to have fallen upon: Indeed *I* am apt to run out in matters that do ſo nearly touch upon your greateſt Concernments.

Beloved, I deſpair of ever bringing you to Salvation, without Sanctification: Or poſſeſſing You with Happineſs, without perſwading you to Holineſs. God knows *I* have not the leaſt hope ever to ſee one of your Faces in Heaven, except You be Converted and Sanctified, and exerciſe your ſelves unto Godlineſs. This is that I drive at. *I* beſeech you ſtudy to further *Perſonal Godlineſs*, and *Family Godlineſs*.

1. *Perſonal Godlineſs*. Let it be your firſt care to ſet up Chriſt in your Hearts. See that you make all your worldly Intereſts to ſtoop to him, that You be entirely and unreſervedly devoted unto him. If You wilfully, and deliberately, and ordinarily harbour any ſin, You are undone. See that You unfeignedly take the *Laws* of Chriſt, as the rule of your words, thoughts, and actions; and ſubject your whole man, members and mind faithfully to him. If You have

a true reſpect to all Gods Commandments, you are ſound at heart. Oh ſtudy to get the Image and impreſs of Chriſt upon you within. Begin with your hearts, elſe you build without a foundation. Labour to get a ſaving change within, or elſe all external performances will be to no purpoſe. And then ſtudy to ſhew forth the power of Godlineſs in the life. Let Piety be your firſt and great buſineſs. 'Tis the higheſt point of Juſtice, to give God his due. Beware that none of you be a Prayerleſs perſon: for that is a moſt certain diſcovery of a Chriſtleſs, and a graceleſs perſon, of one that is a very ſtranger to the fear of God. Suffer not your Bibles to gather duſt. See that you converſe daily with the Word. That man can never lay claim to Bleſſedneſs, whoſe delight is not in the Law of the Lord. Let meditation and ſelf-examination be your daily exerciſe, elſe the Papiſts, yea the Pagans, will condemn us. That the ſhort queſtions, which I have given you as a help to ſelf-examination, may be daily peruſed by you, is the matter of my paſſionate requeſt unto you. If ever you come to any growth in Holineſs, without the conſtant uſe of this practice, I am groſly deceived. And therefore I would beſeech, yea, even charge you, by the Lord, that you would daily examine your ſelves by theſe queſtions, till you have found a better help to this duty.

But Piety, without Charity, is but the half of Chriſtianity, or rather impious Hypocriſie, We may not divide the Tables. See therefore that you do juſtly, and love mercy, and let Equity, and Charity run like an even Thred, throughout all your dealings. Be you temperate in all things, and let Chaſtity, and and Sobriety, be your undivided Companions. Let truth and Purity, Serioufneſs and modeſty, Heavenlineſs and gravity be the conſtant ornaments of your ſpeech. Let patience and humility, ſimplicity & ſincerity ſhine out in all the parts of your converſations. See that you forget & forgive wrongs, and requite them with kindneſs as you would be found children of the moſt high. Be merciful in your Cenſures, and put the moſt favourable conſtruction upon our Brethrens carriage that their actions will reaſonably bear. Be ſlow in promiſing, punctual in fulfilling. Let meekneſs and innocency, Affableneſs, Yieldingneſs, and Curteſie, commend

 your

your converſations to all men. Let none of your Relations want that love and loyalty, that reverence and duty, that tenderneſs, care, and vigilancy, which their ſeveral places and capacities call for. This is throughout Godlineſs. *I* charge you before the moſt high God, that none of you be found a ſwearer, or a Lyar, a lover of evil company, or a ſcoffer, or malicious, or covetous, or a drunkard, or a glutton, unrighteous in his dealing, unclean in his living, or a quarreiler, or a thief, or backbiter, or a railer: for *I* denounce unto you from the living God, that deſtruction and damnation is the end of all ſuch, *Prov.* 13. 20. *Jam.* 5. 12. *Rev.* 21. 8. 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10. *Gal.* 5. 19, 20, 21.

2. Family Godlineſs. He that hath ſet up Chriſt in his heart, will be ſure to ſtudy to ſet him up in his houſe. Let every family with you be a Chriſtian Church; every houſe, a houſe of Prayer; every houſhold a houſhold of faith. Let every houſholder ſay, with *Joſhua*, *I, with my Houſe will ſerve the Lord*, and reſolve with *David*, *Pſalm* 121. 2. *I will walk within my houſe, with a perfect heart.* Let me preſs upon you a few duties, which *I* have been long harping upon, but Alas (*I* ſpeak it to your ſhame) with many (too too many) of you, to little purpoſe in general.

Firſt, Let Religion be in your Families, not as a matter by the by, (to be minded at leiſure, when the world will give you leave) but the ſtanding buſineſs of the houſe. Let them have your prayers as duly as their meals, is there any of your families, but have time for their taking food? wretched man! canſt thou find time to eat in, and not time to Pray in?

Secondly, Settle it upon your Hearts, that your Souls are bound up in the Souls of your Family. They are committed unto you, and (if they be loſt through your neglect) will be required at your hands; Sirs, if you do not, you ſhall know that the charge of Souls is a heavy charge, and that the Blood of Souls is a heavy guilt. O man, haſt thou a charge of Souls to anſwer for, and doſt thou not yet beſtir thy ſelf for them, that their Blood be not found in thy Skirts? Wilt thou do no more for immortal Souls, than thou wilt do for thy Beaſts that periſh? What doſt thou do for thy Children, and Servants? Thou provideſt Meat and Drink for them, agreeable to their Natures, and doſt thou not the ſame for

thy

thy Beasts? Thou giveſt them Medicines, and cheriſheſt them when they be ſick, and doſt thou not ſo much for thy Swine? More particularly.

1. Let the ſolemn Reading of the Word, *Iſa.* 34. 16. *John* 5. 31. *and ſinging of Pſalms, be your Family Exerciſes, Pſalm* 118. 15. See Chriſt ſinging with his Family, *viz.* his Diſciples, *Mat.* 26. 30. *Luke* 9. 18.

2. *Let every perſon in your Families be duly called to an account of their profiting by the word heard or read, as they be about doing your own Buſineſſes.* This is a duty of conſequence unſpeakable, and would be a means to bring thoſe under your Charge, to remember and profit by what they receive. See Chriſts Example in calling his Family to an account. *Mat.* 16. 11. 13. 15.

3. *Often take an account of the Souls under your care concerning their Spiritual eſtates.* Herein you muſt be Followers of Chriſt, *Mat.* 13. 10, 36, 51. *Mark* 4. 10, 11. Make enquiry into their conditions, inſiſt much upon the ſinfulneſs and miſery of their natural eſtate, and upon the neceſſity of Regeneration and Converſion in order to their Salvation. Admoniſh them gravely of their ſins, incourage beginnings. Follow them earneſtly, and let them have no quiet for you, till you ſee them in a ſaving change. This is a duty of high conſequence, but (*I* am afraid) fearfully neglected by ſome that are Godly. Doth not Conſcience ſay, Thou art the man?

4. *Look to the ſtrict ſanctifying of the Sabbath, by all of your Houſholds, Exod.* 20. 10. *Lev.* 23. 3. Many poor Families have little time elſe. O improve but your *Sabbath-days* as diligently in labouring for knowledge, and doing your Makers work, as You do the other daies in doing your own work, and I doubt not, but you may come to ſome proficiencie.

5. *Let the Morning and Evening Sacrifice of ſolemn Prayer, be daily offered up in all your Families. Pſal.* 92. 1, 2. *Exod.* 30. 7, 8. *Luke* 1. 9, 10. Beware they be not found among the Families that call not upon Gods Name; for why ſhould there be wrath from the Lord upon your Families? *Jer.* 10. 25. O miſerable Families without God in the World, that are without Family Prayer! What have you ſo many Family ſins, Family wants, Family Mercies, what and yet no Family Prayers?

Prayers? How do you pray with all *Prayer* and *Supplication*, if You do not with Family Prayer? Say not, I have no time. What haſt thou all thy time on purpoſe to ſerve God, and ſave thy Soul, and is this that for which thou canſt find no time. Find but a heart, and I will find time. Pinch out of your meals and ſleep, rather then want for Prayer. Say not my buſineſs will not give leave. This is thy greateſt buſineſs, to ſave thy ſelf, and the Souls committed to thee. Beſides a whet will be no let. In a word, the bleſſing of all is to be got by Prayer, *Jer.* 29. 11, 12. 2 *Sam.* 7. 29. And what is thy buſineſs without Gods Bleſſing? Say not, *I* am not able. Uſe thy one Talent, and God will increaſe it, *Mat.* 25. 24. *&c.* Helps are to be had till thou art better able. But if there be no other remedy, thou mai'ſt join with thine abler Neighbour. God hath ſpecial regard to joint Prayer, *Jam.* 5. 14. *to* 19. *Acts* 12. 5. *to* 12. 2 *Cor.* 1. 11. and therefore you muſt improve Family advantages for the performing of it.

6. Put every one in your Families upon private Prayer. Obſerve whether they do perform it. Get them the help of a form, if they need it, till they are able to go without. Direct them how to Pray, by minding them of their ſins, wants, and mercies, the materials of Prayer. This was the practice of *John*, and of *Jeſus*, *Luke* 11. 1, 2.

7. Set up Cathechizing in your Families, at the leaſt once every Week. It was my parting, dying requeſt, that you would ſet up and maintain this duty in your Families. Have You done it all accordingly? Cannot your conſciences witneſs, cannot your families witneſs you have not? Well, *I* thought my parting words would have done ſomething with you: *I* hoped the fervent requeſt of a dying Miniſter, would have prevailed for ſuch a ſmall matter with You. What, to this day without ſolemn Catechiſing in your houſes? Ah, what a diſcouragement to your Teacher is this? Brethren, ſhall *I* yet prevail with you? Will you reject me now alſo? O let me perſwade you, before you take off your eyes from theſe Lines, to reſolve to ſet upon the conſtant exerciſe of this Duty. Surely *I* have done and ſuffered more for you then this comes to: will you deny me? *I* beſeech you, let me find, if ever God do bring me again to viſit your houſes, that the words of a ſuffering Miniſter have ſome power with you.

you. *I* have ſent you an help on purpoſe: what ſhall all my perſwaſions be but ſpeaking in the wind? and all my pains but labouring in the fire? Beloved you have no dread of the Almighties Charge, That you ſhould *teach theſe things diligently to your Children, and talk of them as you ſit in your houſe, &c. Deut.* 6. 6, 7, 8, 9. *and* 4. 9, 10 *and* 11. 18, 19, 20. *& train them up in the way they ſhould go, Prov.* 22. 6. *the Margin.* Hath God ſo commended *Abraham*, that he would teach *his Children and his houſhold, Gen.* 18. 19. and that he had ſo many *Inſtructed ſervants, Gen.* 14. 14. *the Margin* hath given ſuch a promiſe to him thereupon, and will not you put in for a ſhare, neither in the praiſe, nor the Promiſe? Hath Chriſt honoured Cathechiſing with his preſence, *Luke* 2. 46. and will not you own it with your practiſe? Say not, they are careleſs, and will not learn. What have you your Authority for, if not to uſe it for God, and the good of their Souls? You will call them up, and force them to do your work; and ſhould you not, at leaſt be as zealous in putting them upon Gods work? Say not, they are dull and are not capable *If* they be dull, God requires of you the more pains and patience, but ſo dull as they are, you will make them learn how to work; and can they not learn as well how to live! Are they capable of the miſteries of your trade, and are they not capable of the plain principles of Religion? well as ever you would ſee the growth of Religion, the cure of ignorance, the remedy of prophaneſs, the downfal of error, fulfill you my joy in going through with this duty.

I have been too long already, and yet I am afraid my Letter will be ended before my work be done; how loath am I to leave you, before *I* have prevailed with you to ſet to the work, to which you are here directed, will you paſs your promiſe, will you give me your hands? Oh that you would! you cannot do me a greater pleaſure. Ask what you will of me; See if I will not do as much for you. Oh that your Families might be a joy to me, as that twice noble Ladies to *John*; who profeſſes he had no greater joy, then to find her Children walking in the truth! Beloved why ſhould you not give the hand one to another, and mutually engage each to other, for more vigorous and diligent endeavours, in promoting Family Godlineſs. *I* muſt tell you, God looks for

more

more than ordinary from you, in such a day as this. He expects that you should do, both in your hearts, and in your houses, somewhat more that ever, under these his extraordinary dispensations. My most dearly beloved mine own bowels in the Lord, will you satisfie the longings of a travelling Minister? will you answer the calls of Divine Providence? would you remove the Incumbent, or prevent the impending Calamities? would you plant Nurseries for the Church of God? would you that God should build your Houses, and bless your substance? would you that your children should bless you? that your Father should bless you? Oh, then set up piety in your Families as ever you would be blessed, or be a blessing, let your hearts and your Houses be the Temples of the living God, in which his worship (according to all the forementioned directions) may be, with constancy reverently performed. Pardon my prolixity and importunity in so earnest pursuing of you; I am yet afraid I have done too soon, and shall end without my Errand. The Lord God perswade you To him I turn me, for I am well assured, he can prevail with you:

O Father of Spirit, that hath set me over thy Flock to watch for their Souls, as one that must give an account. I have long studied thy Will, and taught in thy Name, and do unfeignedly bless thee; that any have believed my Report. I have given unto them the Words which thou gavest me, and they have received them. I have manifested thy Name unto them, and they have kept thy Word. And now I am no more with them, but I come unto thee: Holy Father keep them through thine own Name; for they are thine. As they have kept the Word of thy Patience, so keep thou them in the hour of Temptation. They are but a flock, a little and a helpless flock: but thou art their Shepheard, suffer them not to want. Do thou feed them, and fold them. Let thy Rod and thy Staff comfort them, and let not the

Beaſts of prey fall upon them, to the ſpoiling of their Souls.

But what ſhall I do for them that will not be gathered. I have called after them, but they would not anſwer; I have charged them in thy Name, but they would not hear; I have ſtudied to ſpeak perſwaſively to them, but I cannot prevail. Then I ſaid, I have laboured in vain; I have ſpent my ſtrength for nought, and in vain, yet I cannot give them over, much leſs may I give thee over. Lord perſwade Japhet, *to dwell in the Tents of* Shem. *Lord compel them to come in, and lay the hands of mercy upon them, as thou didſt on lingring* Lot, *and bring them forth, that they may eſcape for their lives and not be conſumed. Lord, I pray thee open their eyes that they may ſee, and lay hold upon their hearts by thy Omnipotent Grace. Do thou turn them, and they ſhall be turned: O bring back the miſerable Captives, and ſuffer not the enemy of mankind to drive away the moſt of the flock before mine eyes, and to deride the fruitleſs endeavours of thy Laborers, and boaſt over them, that he can domire with them, though he ſeek to ruine them, than all the beſeechings, counſels, and charges of thy Servants that ſeek to ſave them. Lord, if I could find out any thing that would pierce them, that would make its way into their hearts, thou knoweſt I would uſe it. But I have been many years pleading thy cauſe in vain. O let not theſe endeavors alſo be loſt. O God, find out every ignorant, every prophane ſinner, every prayerleſs Soul, and every prayerleſs family, and convince them of their miſerable condition, while without thee in the World. Set thy Image upon their Souls, ſet up thy Worſhip in their Families.*

Let

Let not pride, ignorance, or ſlothfulneſs, keep them in neglect of the means of knowledge. Let thine eyes be over the place of my deſires for good, from one end of the year to the other end thereof. Let every Houſe therein be a Seminary of Religion, and let thoſe that caſt their eyes upon theſe lines, find thee ſliding in by the ſecreet influence of thy Grace into their hearts, and irreſiſtably engaging them to do thy pleaſure. Amen, Amen.

LETTER. XXXII.

[He that endureth to the end ſhall be ſaved.]

To the moſt loving, and beſt beloved, the Servants of Chriſt in Huntington, *Grace and Peace.*

Moſt dear Chriſtians,

I Do thankfully acknowledge, both to God and you, that I am many ways obliged to love, and ſerve you; and ſurely, when the Lord ſhall turn our Captivity, I will (through his Grace) endeavour to ſhew my ſelf thankful, wherein I may unto you. I am the more ſenſible of your great love, becauſe I cannot be inſenſible, how little I have deſerved ſuch a Mercy, and how little *I* have been able to do, to oblige you. Able, I ſay, for I am ſure. I have been willing to be much more ſerviceable to you: But now, Letters and Prayers are all that I have for you; of theſe I ſhall be ready to be prodigal. Your love to me hath been very bountiful: I may not forget the liberal Supplies that you have ſent, many of you, even out of your poverty to me; and not to me only, but to the whole Family of my Brethren, and Fellow-Priſoners, who do all bleſs you, and ſend by theſe with me, their thankful reſpects unto you. I fervently pray, and do

nor

not doubt to ſpeed, that you may reap in Grace and Glory, what you have ſown to us in bounty. *Verily, there is a reward for the Righteous.* Ah, how ſure is it! And how great and how near is it? Come on, my dear Brethren, and Fellow-Travellers Stir up your ſelves, and ſet to your race. See that you loiter not, but ſpeed apace in your holy courſe. What tire by the way, or think of looking back, when Heaven is the prize? God forbid. To him that ſoweth righteouſneſs there ſhall be a ſure reward. What though it ſhould ſeem ſlow? As long as it is ſo ſure, and ſo great, never be diſcouraged: In the end you ſhall reap, if you faint not. Wait but a while, and you ſhall have a bleſſed harveſt. The Lord ſpeaks to the Chriſtian, as he to his Creditor in another caſe. Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Oh now for Faith and Patience! How ſafely, how ſweetly would theſe carry us to our home and harbour, through all difficulties. Brethren beloved, be ye followers of them, who through Faith and Patience inherit the Promiſes. It is want of patience that undoes the world. Patience, I mean, not ſo much in the bearing the inflicted evil, as in waiting for the deferred good. If the reward of Religion would be preſently in hand, who would not be Religious? Who but the deceitful world count it doubtful and diſtant; and they are all for ſomething in hand, and ſo take up with a preſent felicity. The Lord deals all upon truſt, and upon that account is but little deait with. You muſt have patient, and be content to plow and ſow, and wait for the return of all at the harveſt, when this life is ended They that like not Religion upon theſe terms, may ſee where they can mend their Markets. But you, my Brethren, be ſtedfaſt, unmoveable, abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as you know your labour ſhall not be in vain in the Lord. Wait a little, there is but a ſhort life between you, and the bleſſed inheritance of the endleſs Glory. Ah wretched unbelievers! how worthy are you to be ſhut for ever out of the Kingdom, that did ſo undervalue all the Glory, that God had promiſed, as not to count to ſufficient to pay them for a little waiting? Beloved, lift up your eyes and behold your Inheritance, the good Land that is beyond the *Jordan*, and that goodly Mountain. The Promiſes are a Map of Heaven. Do but view it believingly and conſiderately,

derately, as it is darkly drawn there, and tell me, what think you of that worthy portion, that goodly Heritage? will not all this make you amends for your ſtay? Why then act like Believers. Never bethink the pains, nor expences of Religion. Let no man fear he ſhall come off a loſer. What though you are much upon the ſpending hand? I might tell you, God is beforehand with you however: but I would have you principally to look forward. It is much that God hath [laid out] upon you; but who can tell what he hath [laid up] for them that fear him? And will you miſs of all, for want of patience? God forbid. Behold the Husbandman waiteth for the precious fruits of the Earth, and hath long patience, till he receive the early and later rain. Be ye alſo patient, ſtabliſh your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. What ſhall the Husbandman have more patience for the fruits of the Earth, than you for the precious fruits of your Faith? The Husbandman hath no ſuch certainty as you: he hath but a probability of an harveſt, and yet he hath patience; he is content to venture. He is at great pains, and much coſt, he is ſtill laying out, and hath nothing coming in, and yet he is content to wait for his reimburſement, till the Corn be grown. But your harveſt is moſt ſure, as ſure as the irrevocable Decree, the infallible promiſe, the immutable Oath of a God, a God that cannot lie, that knows no place for Repentance, can make it. Again, the Husbandman hath no ſuch increaſe to look for as you. Oh, if he were but ſure, that every Corn would bear a Crown with what exaltation and joy, rather than patience, would he go through all his coſt and labour. Why, Brethren, ſuch is a Believers increaſe. Every Grain ſhall produce a Crown; and every Tear ſhall bring forth a Pearl; and every minute in pains or Prayers, an age of Joy and Glory. Beſides, the Husbandman hath long patience, and will not you have a little patience? It is not long patience that God doth expect of you: for behold, the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Will the Garriſon yield when relief is at hand? Or the Merchant ſit down and give up his hopes, when within ſight of the Harbour? Or will the Husbandman deſpond, and give up all for loſt, when he ſees the Fields even white for the Harveſt? Or ſhall he do more for

a crop

a crop of Corn, than you will do for a crop of Glory? far be it. Behold the Judge is even at Door. The Lord is at hand. He cometh quickly, and his reward is with him. He comes with the Crown in his hand, to ſet upon the head of patience. Therefore caſt not away your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. The Priſoners of the Lord, your Brethren in the patience of Jeſus, can tell you, it is good ſuffering for ſuch a Maſter. We muſt tell you, as they ſaid to our Lord in another caſe, He is worthy for whom you ſhould do this. God is beyond meaſure gracious to us h re. He ſhines bright into our priſon, bleſſed be his Name. He waters us from Heaven, and Earth. As we truſt, you forgot not the poor Priſoners, when you pray, ſo we would that many thankſgivings ſhould abound in our behalf. And Prayer being the only Key that can open our Priſons, we truſt that you will not ſlack, nor let your hands be heavy, but pray and not faint: and doubtleſs Prayer will do it. But I am apt to paſs the bounds of a Letter, yet I promiſe my ſelf now an eaſie pardon for ſo loving a treſpaſs. With my dear Loves to you all, I commend you to God, and the Word of his Grace. Though I have done writing, yet not praying. I will promiſe, where my Letter ends, my Prayers ſhall begin. Farewel dear Brethren: Fare you well in the Lord, I am

An unworthy Embaſſador of Jeſus in Bond,

JOS. ALLEINE.

From the Priſon at Juelcheſter,
Octob. 29. 1663.

LETTER XXXIII.

[For Perſeverance.]

To my dear Friends the Servants of Chriſt in Luppit, *Salvation.*

Beloved Chriſtians,

HAving taken up a Reſolution to Write to, and to endeavour to confirm all the Places, where I have gone up and down Preaching the Kingdom of God, You were by no means to be omitted. You were the People that were laſt upon my heart, before my taking up, and had I not been made a Priſoner, I think I had in a few hours after the time of my Apprehenſion been with you. Now I can no way but by Prayers, Letters, and Councels viſit you; and ſo have ſent theſe, to let you know, that you are upon my Heart, and that your Welfare is dear unto me. I bleſs the Lord to hear that his Work doth not ceaſe among you. It is the Joy of our Bonds, Beloved, to hear that the Word is not bound, and that Satan hath not his deſign upon the People of God, who doubtleſs intended by theſe Sufferings to have ſtruck Terrour into them, and to have made their Hands weak. Know, dear Chriſtians, that the Bonds of the Goſpel are not tedious through Grace unto us, that Chriſt is a Maſter worth a ſuffering for, that there is really enough in Religion to defray all our Charges, to quit all the Coſt and Expence you can be at in or upon it; That you may Build upon it that you can never be loſers by Jeſus Chriſt, that Chriſts Priſon is better than the Worlds Paradiſe, that the Divine Attributes are alone an All-ſufficient Livelihood, that the Influences of Heaven, and ſhines of Gods Countenance are ſufficient to lighten the darkſomeſt Dungeon, and to perfume and ſweeten the noiſomeſt Priſon to a poor Believer; that if you can bring Faith and Patience, and the Aſſurance of the Divine Favour with you to a Priſon, you will live comfortably in ſpight of Earth & Hell. Theſe are Truths that the Priſoners of Chriſt can in a meaſure Seal unto; and

I would have you to be more ſoundly aſſured of, and eſtabliſhed in. Brethren we are of the ſame mind in a Priſon, that we were of in the Pulpit; that there is no life to a life of Holineſs; that Chriſt, and his Yoak, and his Croſs, are worthy of all acceptation; that it is the beſt, and wiſeſt, and ſafeſt and gainfulleſt courſe in the World to ſtick cloſe to Chriſt and his Ways, and to adhere to them in all hazards. Come on, Beloved Chriſtians, come on, ſlack not your pace, but give diligence to the full aſſurance of Hope unto the end, and be ye followers of them who through Faith and Patience inherit the Promiſes. Strengthen the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees. If you faint in the day of Adverſity, your ſtrength is ſmall. Chear up, my Brethren, look what a Crown, what a Kingdom here is; What ſay you? Is not here a worthy Portion, a goodly Heritage? Were it not pity to loſe all this for want of Diligence and Patience? Come, dear Chriſtians, and fellow Travellers, *I* pray you, let us put on: Pluck up the weary Limbs, our Home is within ſight. Lift up your Eyes from the *Piſga* of the Promiſes: You may ſee the Land of Reſt. Will any of you think of returning into *Egypt*? God forbid: A little patience, and Chriſt will come. Behold, the Husbandman waiteth for the precious fruits of the Earth, and hath long patience till he receive the early and later Rain: Be ye alſo patient, ſtabliſh your Hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. He is not a Chriſtian indeed, that cannot be content to tarry for his Preferment in another World. Caſt upon it, my Brethren, that your Kingdom is not of this World; that here you muſt have Tribulations, and that all is well as long as we are ſecured for Eternity. Exhort one another daily: ſtrive together in Prayer, unite your ſtrength therein, and pull a main: Mercy will come ſooner or later, however we will be content to wait till the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Ah how ſurely will he come! He will render Tribulation to them that trouble us, and to us that are troubled, reſt with him. Onely believe and wait: What not watch with him one hour? Why the Judge is even at the door! And how bleſſed will you be if you do but continue and hold faſt till he come! Watch therefore, and ſtand faſt, quit you like men, be Zealous, and let your hearts be ſtrong: God is your Friend, and

you may trust him. He is able to bear you out, and bear you up: faint not therefore, but be stedfast, unmoveable, abounding in the works of the Lord. Speak often one to another, provoke to love, and to good Works. Let the Bay of opposition against Godliness, make the Torrent of your Zeal break over with the more violence. But it's time to end, I have been bold to call upon you, you see; and to stir you up by way of remembrance. May the Spirit of the most high God excite you, encourage you, enflame you: may these poor lines be some quickning to you: may the good-will of him that dwelt in the Bush dwell with you. My dear loves to you all, pray for the Prisoners. Farewel dear Brethren, farewel in the Lord, I am

Yours in the Bonds of the Lord Jesus,

JOS. ALLEINE.

Octob. 11. 1665.

LETTER XXXIV.

[To a Back-sliding Fellow Student.]

Sir,

WHom this will find you, or when, or where, I know not; but I have shot this arrow at a venture. Once you were an Associate with me in *Corpus Christi*, where I remember your blameless Conversation, and your zealous affection for, and adhesion to the ways and people of God. May you be still found in the same paths of holiness, without which no man shall see God. The vows of God are upon me (which, I confess, I have been to slack to pay) that I would put you in remembrance, and in all Brotherly tenderness advise you, to remember from whence you are fallen. I was informed, before your leaving of *England*, of many unhappy miscarriages, which the great reproach of your holy profession, you had been too manifestly guilty of, I am not without

without some hope, that the Lord may have since recalled you, and brought you back to himself: and yet not without more fear, lest, if the power of corruption were so strong, as to precipitate you with such violence, at such a time as that was, and in such a place as *England*, as *Oxon* where you had so many encouragements, and inducements, examples, and faithful friendly, watchful observers, you may now much more be carried away, in such a place, and among such company, as now you may be likely to be in. Sir, I beseech you to be assured, that nothing but the conscience of my duty hath engaged me, now you have been so many years a stranger to me, and are at so many thousand miles distance from me, to write notwithstanding to you. And I beseech you, bear a little with me. Is it wisdom after you have begun in the Spirit, to end in the flesh? you did run well, who hath hindred you? I remember your strict walkings, your holy converse, your many tears: will you lose the things that you have wrought? have you found out another, a nearer way to Heaven? do you hope to get in at the wide Gate, in the broad way? need I to mind you, that it had been better for you never to have known the way of Life, then after you have known it, to turn aside from the Holy Commandment? can you ever enter into Gods Hill, without you be of clean hands, and a pure heart? I know you are not ignorant, *That strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it:* and will you yet do as the most, and decline the way of strictness, and whole self-denial, and give the flesh the reins? what, when God, that cannot lie, hath said, *If you live after the flesh, you shall die?* Do you not know that you do in vain name the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, except you depart from iniquity? I am sure you know it: Oh Sir, consider it, improve it. Oh, have you so learnt Christ, as to think, that the way of carnal liberty and looseness, the way of evil company and fleshliness, is the way to eternal life? I am not for tying up Salvation to this, or that Opinion: but certainly, let men be of what opinion they will, without strictness, self-denial, and holy diligence, they cannot be saved, *Mat.* 16. 42. *Mat.* 11. 12. 1 *Pet.* 15, 16. Once you could say with *David*, *I am a companion to all them that fear thee:* is it so now? O Sir,

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let not the wicked entice you. Hath not God ſaid, *A Companion of fools ſhall be deſtroyed, Prov.* 13.20. That you muſt forſake the fooliſh, if you deſire to live, *Prov.* 9. 6. Sir, I have no more hopes ever to meet you more on Earth: O that I might meet you in Heaven! let us tread the ſame path of Holineſs, and then we ſhall doubtleſs meet there. But ſurely you muſt deeply, and timely repent of, and return from your grievous back-ſlidings, or elſe I deſire never to meet in your Heaven. But why ſhould not we, that have ſo often met in ſerious and holy Prayer together, we that have ſo often met at the Lords Table together, we that have ſo often eat together, and faſted together, meet in glory together? I beſeech your dear Sir, if the Lord hath not already ſmitten you to the duſt, and broken you, and reduced to the ways of holineſs, now conſider your ways, and turn your feet to his Teſtimonies. Oh remember that, *The back-ſlider in heart ſhall be filled with his own ways.* God hath ſaid it, and who ſhall reverſe it? *If any man draw back, my Soul ſhall have no pleaſure in him.* And once again, *when the righteous turneth away from his righteouſneſs, and committeth iniquity, ſhall he live? In his Treſpaſs that he hath treſpaſſed, ſhall he not die?* I know Prayers can reach you, though at ſo vaſt a diſtance; I ſhall add to them theſe Counſels, and commit you to God, remaining

Yours real Friend in Chriſt,

JOS. ALLEINE.

Juelcheſter, May 18*th.* 1664.

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LETTER XXXV.

[Good Counsel to his Wife.]

My most dear Theodosia,

THou seemest to have been long from me: let nothing any longer detain thee, but my Sisters necessity, or Fathers Authority. I am very sorry that thou should lose two Sacraments. I am in a comfortable state of health, through Divine goodness, to which be glory for ever. See that thou love and admire that Fountain of our life, and peace; and be ever mindful that 'tis all thy business to love, and serve, and praise thy Creator and Redeemer. I have no other business but this to write to thee about: but this is all our business. What be use to call business is but vanity and pastime and some by matter in comparison of this. Remember and forget not that 'tis thy chief end to glorifie God, and enjoy him for ever. Learn well that Lesson, and know that it is the only thing necessary. Every morning remember that thy serving and pleasing of God, is the whole business of that day, and therefore set out accordingly with an express design and intention to please God in thy eating, drinking, visiting, conversing, calling, and duties of thy Relations throughout the day. My most dear heart, I have nothing in the world that doth concern thee, or me so much to write of to thee, as this is. Oh that thou mayst still be laying up in Heaven! still furthering thy account; still adding to the heap, and encreasing thy glorious reward! nothing is done for God, but thou shalt hear of it again. Whatever is not done for God, is but so much lost. Those things which others do being led by their natural affections and desires, those things do thou do with holy aims, for spiritual ends, and then God will put it on the account, as so much done for him. So it is my dearest, God keeps a true account. See that thou believe it, and so plow in hope, and sowe in hope, pray and hear with an eye to the sure reward. Let thy hopes be strong and lively, and then thy hands will be strong, and thy resolutions and affections will be strong.

My time is very precious, and I would not lose any inch of it. See thou to it, that my time in writing this letter be not lost time. Love God the more, and set thine heart the straighter towards him, and do but practice this one thing, in every solemn action to look to thy ends, and then I have got well, and thou better by these Counsels. My dearest, I love thee in truth and tenderness, but my love signifies little, unless it serve thine eternal good,

I rest thine own,

JOS. ALLEINE.

LETTER. XXXVI.

[To his Wife, Desires after Heaven.]

My dear Heart,

MY heart is now a little at rest to write to thee. I have been these three days much disturbed, and set out of frame. Strong solicitations I have had from several hands, to accept very honourable preferment in several kinds, some friends making a Journey on purpose to propound it, but I have not found the invitations (though I confess very honourable, and such as are or will be suddenly embraced by men of far greater worth and eminency) to suit with the inclinations of my own heart, as I was confident they would not with thine. I have sent away my friends satisfied with the reasons of my refusal, and am now ready with joy to say with *David. Soul return unto thy rest.* But alas, that such things should disturb me, I would live above this lower region, that no passages or providence whatsoever might put me out of frame, nor disquiet my soul, and unsettle me from my desirest rest. I would have my heart fixed upon God, so as no occurrences might disturb my tranquility, but I might be still in the same quiet and even frame. Well, though I am apt to be unsettled, and quickly set off the hinges, yet methinks I am like a Bird

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out of the neſt, I am never quiet till I am in my old way of Communion with God, like the needle in the Compaſs that is reſtleſs, till it be turned towards the Pole. I can ſay through grace with the Church, with my ſoul have I deſired thee in the night, and with my Spirit within me have I ſought thee early, my heart is early and late with God, and 'tis the buſineſs and delight of my life to ſeek him. But alas, how long ſhall I be a ſeeking? how long ſhall I ſpend my days in wiſhing and deſiring, when my glorified Brethren ſpend theirs in rejoycing and enjoying? look as the poor impriſoned captive ſighs under the burdenſome clog of his Irons and can only pear through the Grace, and think of, and long for the ſweetneſs of that liberty which he ſees others enjoy: ſuch methinks is my condition: I can only look through the Grate of this Priſon my fleſh, I ſee *Abraham*, and *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, ſitting down in the Kingdom of God, but alas, I my ſelf muſt ſtand without longing, ſtriving, fighting, running, praying, waiting, for what they are enjoying. Oh happy, thrice happy ſouls! when ſhall theſe Fetters of mine be knocked off? when ſhall I be ſet at liberty from this Priſon of my body? you are clothed with glory, when I am clothed with duſt. I dwell in fleſh, in a Houſe of Clay, when you dwell with God in a Houſe not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens. I muſt be continually clog'd with the cumberſome burden of this Dung-hill Body, that had it not a ſoul dwelling in it like Salt as it were to preſerve, it would ſoon turn to putrefaction and corruption, and be as odious and loathſom as the filthieſt Carrion, when you have put on incorruption and immortality. What continual moleſtation am I ſubject to by reaſon of this fleſh? what pains doth it coſt me to keep this earthen veſſel from breaking, it muſt be fed, it muſt be clothed, it muſt be exerciſed, recreated, and which is worſt of all cheriſhed with time-devouring ſleep, ſo that I live but little of the ſhort time I have allotted me here: but oh bleſſed ſouls, you are ſwallowed up of immortality and life, your race is run, and you have received your Crown. How cautious muſt I be to keep me from dangers, how apt am I to be troubled with the cares and fears of this life, moleſting my ſelf with the thoughts of what I ſhall eat, and what I ſhall put on, and wherewithal I ſhall provide for my ſelf and mine,

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when your ſouls are taken with nothing but God and Chriſt, and 'tis your work to be ſtill contemplating, and admiring that love that redeemed you from all this. Alas, how am I encompaſt with infirmities, and ſtill carry about me Death in my boſom, what pains and coſt muſt I be at to repair the rotten and ruinous building of this earthly Tabernacle, which when I have done I am ſure will ſhortly fall about my ears; when you are got far above mortality, and are made equal with the Angels. Oh I groan earneſtly to be cloathed upon with my houſe which is from Heaven, being willing rather to be abſent from the body, and preſent with the Lord: Oh, when ſhall I come and appear before him. When ſhall I receive the purchaſe of my Saviour, the fruit of my prayers, the harveſt of my labours, the end of my Faith, the Salvation of my ſoul? Alas, what do I here? this is not my reſting place. My treaſure is in Heaven, and my heart is in Heaven, Oh when ſhall I be where my heart is? woe is me that I ſojour in *Meſech*, and dwell in the Tents of *Kedar*. Oh that I had wings like a Dove, that I might flie away and be at reſt. Then would I haſten my eſcape from the windy ſtorm and tempeſt, and be out of the reach of fears, diſturbances, and diſtractions. How long ſhall I live at ſuch a diſtance from my God, at ſuch a diſtance from my Countrey? Alas, how can I be merry, how can I ſing the Lord Song in a ſtrange Land; no, I will hang my Harp upon the Willows, and ſit down and weep when I remember *Sion*. But yet my fleſh ſhall reſt in hope, and I will daily bath my ſoul in the ſweet thoughts of my bleſſed home. I will rejoyce in hopes of what I do not yet enjoy, and content my ſelf with the taſte of what I ſhall ſhortly have my fill of. But ſtay this Pen runs not beyoud thy Commiſſion. Alas, now I receive what I have gotten, I perceive I have ſet down what I would be rather than what I am, and wrote more of my dears heart than my own penning, rather a Copy for my ſelf, than a Copy of my ſelf. Well, I thank God I haue got ſome heat by it for all, the Lord grant thou mayſt get a thouſand times more. The Lord grant the requeſt I daily pour out before him, and make us helps and furtherances to each others ſoul, that we may quicken and promote and forward one another in his ways. Help me by thy Prayers as thou

doſt

doſt always. The God of all peace and comfort be with thee my ſweet love, Farewel,

Thine beyond Expreſſion,

JOS. ALLEINE.

LETTER XXXVII.

[God is a ſatisfying Portion.]

My moſt dear Pylades,

HAd not my right hand long ſince forgot her cunning, and the Almighty ſhook the Pen out of my hand, I ſhould long ere this have been writing to thee: but it is a wonder of Divine Power and goodneſs that my ſoul had not before this time dwelt in ſilence, and that death had not put the long period to all my writing and converſe.

O my *Pylades*, what ſhall I ſay unto thee now I begin to write, where ſhall I begin, when ſhall I end? methinks I am as a full Bottle quite inverted, where the forward preſſing of the overhaſty liquor makes the evacuatin more ſlow, and my thoughts are like a thronging croud ſticking in the door.

Long is the ſong of love that I have to tell thee, I rejoice in the conſtancie of thy love, that the waters of ſo long a ſilence, and ſo great a diſtance have not yet quenched it, but thy deſires are towards me, and thy heart is with me, though providence hath hindred me from thy much deſired company. I will aſſure thee it hath been a pleaſure to my heart a good part of this ſummer to hope that I ſhould come one half of the way to give thee a meeting; but ſuch is my weakneſs hitherto, that I am forced to put off thoſe hopes till the Spring, when, if God give me ſtrength to ride, I intend to ſee thee before mine own Home. I thank thee for all the dear expreſſions of thy fervent love: Methinks I ſee it, and feel how it runs through all the veins of every Letter, nay, every

every Line? I needed not so chargeable a Testomony as thy golden Token, with which I was somthing displeased, because *I* thought thou needest more than my self: but the love thereby expressed is most dearly welcome to me. What thou talkest of Retribution, and of Justice, doth not so well relish with me, because the Phrases seem improper to the love professt between us, *I* never lookt for any return from thee but love, which is the paying of all thy Debts: my expences have indeed been vast and almost incredible; but surely goodness, and mercy hath followed me, and do follow me in every place, and in every change of my condition; so that as to temporals I have lack of nothing, and as for spirituals I abound and superabound, and the streams of my comforts have been full and running over; the joy of the Lord hath been my strength at weakest, and in the multitude of my thoughts within me, his comforts have refresh'd my Soul, I have found God a satisfying portion to me, and have sat down under his shadow with full delights, and his fruit is most sweet to my taste: he is my strength and my Song, for I will talke of him, and write of him with perpetual pleasure. Through grace, *I* can say, methinks *I* am now in my Element, since I have begun to make mention of him, I am rich in him, and happy in him, and my soul saith unto him with *David*, Thou hast made me most Blessed for evermore, and happy is the hour that ever I was born to be made partaker of so blisful a Treasure, so endless a felicity, so Angelical Prerogatives, as *I* have in him; O sweet are his converses, how delightful it is to Triumph in his Love!

Suffer me to be free with thee, where should I pour out my Soul, if not into thy bosom? did the poor woman call upon her friends and neighbours to rejoyce together with her at the finding of a lost Groat? and shall not I tell to thee the keeper of the Secrets of my Soul, & the friend of my inmost Bosom, what a friend is the Lord to me, though an unworthy sinner, shall not I run and tell thee what a treasure I have found. And here methinks the story of the Lepers comes not unaptly to thy mind, who said one to another when they had eat and drunk, and carried away silver and gold, and raiment, and went and hid it, *we do not well, this day is a day of good tydings and we hold our peace.* It is fit that *I* should be cloath-

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ed with ſhame; *I* acknowledge before God, who trieth the hearts, *I* am unworthy, everlaſtingly unworthy, but it is not fit that he ſhould loſe his praiſe, nay rather, let him be the more ador'd, and magnifi'd, and admir'd for ever and ever, and let my Secrets ſay, *Amen.* Bleſs the Lord, O my Soul bleſs the Lord, O my Friend, let us exhalt his Name together, he is my ſolace in my ſolitude, he is my ſtanding comforter, my tried friend, my ſure refuge, my ſafe retreat, he is my Paradiſe, he is my Heaven; and my heart is at reſt in him: and *I* will ſit and ſing under his ſhadow, as a Bird among the Branches; and whither ſhould *I* go but unto him? Shall *I* leave the fatneſs of the Olive, and ſweetneſs of the Fig-tree, and of the Vine, and go and put my truſt under the ſhadow of the Bramble? No, *I* have made my everlaſting choice: this is my reſt for ever, he is my well Beloved in whom *I* am well pleaſed. Suffer me to boaſt a little here, *I* may Glory without Vanity, and *I* can praiſe him without end or meaſure, but *I* have nothing to ſay of my ſelf: *I* find thou doſt overvalue me, and magnifie me above my meaſure; ſet the Crown upon the head of Chriſt, let nothing be great with thee but him, give him the glory: but thy love pleaſeth me, only *I* have this exception, that thou art in love with thine own Idol, as *Auſtin* ſomewhere ſpeaks to a friend of his that did too much magnifie him, and magnifieſt a Creature of thine own fancie, and not thy poor *Oreſtes:* God that knoweth all things, knoweth my poverty, how little, how low, and how mean *I* am, and how ſhort *I* come of the attainments of the Saints, who yet do themſelves come ſo exceedingly ſhort of the Rule that God hath ſet before us: *I* often think of the Complaint of the devout *Monſier* [*I* feel my ſelf very poor this week, and very defective in the love of God; if you would know wherein you may pleaſure me, love God more; that what is wanting in me, may be made up in the abundance of your love:] in this, my *Pylades*, in this thou maiſt moſt highly pleaſure me; love God a little the better, praiſe him a little the more for my ſake; let me have this to pleaſe my ſelf in, that God is a little the better loved for me, and that *I* have blowed up, if it be but one flaſh, nay, but one ſpark of Divine Love in the boſom of my deareſt friend towards him.

But

But why, my *Pylades*, why is thy ſtile towards me changed? why haſt thou loſt the old and wonted ſtrain of our former pleaſing familiarity? this I could not but obſerve with ſome diſguſt, is it becauſe thy heart is changed; but this is a queſtion in which I cannot ask any reſolution; I am ſatisfied and at reſt in thy love, but what this alterations means, I know not; art thou willing by degrees to grow ſtrange; it cannot be, thou ſeeſt however that I cannot change my voice.

Beſides, I find ſome jealous paſſages in thy laſt lines unto us; but canſt thou think that *T. B.* can be put into the ballance againſt my old friend, my own, my Covenant *Pylades*, or can a friend of words come into any competition or compariſon with thine experienced love? I cannot entertain the thoughts of this without ſome diſdain.

But thy needful cautions are acceptable to me, I deſire to foreſee and provide for manifold changes and ſtorms; I know I am not yet in the harbor; O pray with me that I enter not into Temptation, for I am very weak in Spirit, as well as in body, God knoweth. But there is no end with me, ſomewhere or other I muſt break off, and thou wilt ſay it is time to ſhut up; for once only know, that I am thy daily Orator, and will be whileſt I am: and yet once more I muſt have room to add my thankful acknowledgement of thine and thy coſtly kindneſs; and ſo with our moſt dear affections to you both, I commend you to the God of love, ſtill abiding

Thy faſt and ſure

ORESTES.

Bath, Octob. 12. 1658.

LET-

LETTER XXXVII.

[To a perſon of Quality to be conſtant.]

Moſt Honoured Sir,

MAny charges have paſſed over both you and my ſelf, ſince my laſt Writing to you, but I am glad to hear that in that great change of your condition, you have made ſo wiſe and happy a choice. Mine unfeigned deſire to God is for your Temporal and Spiritual proſperity; and that the bleſſings of both Worlds may be heaped up upon you. Yet I ſhould deſire you not to expect too much here, nor to count it a ſtrange thing, if you meet with diſappointments. Is it enough if you have the Lord for your portion, and Heaven for your Inheritance; though the World ſhould not anſwer your expectations. I doubt not but you will be likely, as well as we, to meet with manifold temptations: the Lord make you, when you have done all to ſtand. Hold out a while in faith, patience, and ſelf-denial, and you ſhall be as ſure as God can make you of the Crown. Now ariſe and ſhine, and hold forth the power of holineſs in all your converſe. We have lived in times when Religion was the way to credit and eſteem, and then it was more difficult to diſcern ſincerity of ones profeſſion, becauſe men might be drawn to it upon worldly ends. But now is the time when God will prove us, if we will appear for him, and own his ways, when they are the common ſcorn of the World. Oh Sir, think it not hard if God do call you forth to own him in ſuch a time as this, when few of your rank and quality will bear you company: but look upon it as a ſpecial advantage to prove your ſincerity, and your fidelity to the Lord your Maker. The holy and bleſſed life of that noble Marqueſs *Galeacius*, I ſhould much commend to your reading and imitation. Court not the World nor its preferments, *Moſes* his ſelf-denying choice. which the World would have branded for unparalled folly, when he voluntarily left all the Court-preferments and pleaſures, the wiſeſt Judge commends for the greateſt wiſdom. If Religion will make you vile, reſolve with that Royal Worthy,

thy, that you will be yet more vile. Remember who accounted the reproaches of Christ greater riches, than the Treasures of *Egypt*. Verily it is a greater honour to you to be vilified for Christ, than to be dignified with the highest Titles that the greatest on Earth can confer: and to be call'd *Puritan* or *Phanatique*, for the bold and constant owning of the power of Christianity, than to have whole Pages filled up with the honourable offices and marks of Dignity, that Earthly Princes can bestow. Now then is your time to get the true honour. Few of your places and dignity, will take this way to get it: But he that can but use the prospective of Faith, and look as far as the approaching Judgement, will easily see the vanity of the worlds riches and flattering preferments, and the everlasting glory and honour wherewith the dispised Saints shall surely be Crowned. Fix your eyes and Meditations here, and that will set you above the worlds temptations, when by its offers or threatnings it would make you to warp, and to let go your hold-fast of Eternal life. Now is the time for you to make Heaven sure, and when that is done, you are prepared for the worst that can come. I desire you to accept of my service and respects, and my Wives, which I do hereby present unto you, and to your most deserving yoak-fellow, whom I unfeignedly honour though I never saw her, not so much for her noble blood, which yet calls for great respects, as for her far more noble qualificarions, and privildges of her second birth. Pardon my boldness with you, in troubling you so long, I am Sir,

Your most Oblidged Friend, and Servant,

JOS. ALLEINE.

Feb. 26. 1661.

LET-

LETTER XXXVII.

Dear Couſin,

THough I have been in the valley of the ſhadow of death, though I have had more than one foot in the Grave, and have been in deaths often, yet the love and remembrance of you, ever liveth on my heart: I have long had neither feet to walk nor hands to write, yet I have borrowed hands as you ſee, rather than I would ſtay any longer from warning and admoniſhing of you. Dear Couzin, that ſoul of yours, that precious immortal ſoul is of no light value with me! I pray hard for its Salvation: I have a Godly fear for you, leſt your ſoul ſhould miſcarry in a crowd of worldly buſineſs, and of earthly cares. Ah, my dear Niece, it comforts me that you are ſo ſetled for this world, and are in want of nothing, I bleſs the Lord for this, but me thinks this doth not ſatisfie me. Oh, that I could be ſure that you were once ſafe ſetled in Chriſt; though you are, I truſt comfortably furniſhed with earthly things, yet in this you are but half provided for: have you a Treaſure in Heaven? have you laid hold on eternal life? have you made ſure work for everlaſting? have you paſt the ſtraits of the New-Birth? do you bear upon you the marks of the Lord Jeſus?

If you ſhall paſs by a ſumptuous Fabrick, and a great Lordſhip, and ſhould lay claim to all as your inheritance, and p'eaſe your ſelf with the hopes of enjoying all this, when you had nothing to ſhew, no Writing, no Evidence to produce, as a ground for any ſuch hope, would not every one ſay, this were a piece of ſtrange vanity and imprudence; much greater folly is it to promiſe our ſelves a part in Paradiſe, and reſt ſatisfied in a meer perſwation that we are the Heirs of Heaven, when we cannot prove our Title from the Book of God, nor produce from within our ſelves, the ſure and certain marks of the children of God.

Ah, dear Couzin, rouze up your ſelf make conſcience, to deal plainly and freely with your ſoul, ſay within your ſelf, I have hopes for Heaven: but where are my grounds and my

Evidences? do I not build without a foundation? do I venture my Salvation upon meer uncertainties? What have I, what do I more than others? I pray, I hear, I read, but may not a meer Hypocrite do all this? I run not with others into the wretched practice of Lying, and Couzening, Whoredom, and the like; but what is this more than a Phariſee may have to ſay for himſelf? can I prove by Scripture my claim to Heaven? can I produce Chapter and Verſe to juſtifie my ſelf?

Oh Couzin, fear, leaſt a Promiſe being left of entring into reſt, you ſhould by any miſtakes, or ſelf-deceits fall ſhort through unbelief; fear leſt you ſhould take Counters for gold, or ſome common workings for ſaving Grace. Oh, there is a world of counterfeit Coin going, multitudes periſh by miſtake, and wake in Hell, whileſt they dreamt they were in Heaven: the tempter is very ſubtile, and will ſure deceive if he can: your heart is deceitful above all things, and is willing to cheat you if it can. Therefore am I engaged ſo earneſtly to call upon you, as one that watcheth for your ſoul, to ariſe ſpeedily and to ſet roundly to your work. Oh, conſider your danger, and work out your Salvation with fear and trembling: away with theſe lazie Prayers, away with theſe cold and heartleſs Profeſſions, away with this drowſie, liveleſs, lifeleſs Religion; beſtir your ſelf to purpoſe for your ſoul before it be too late, ſearch your conſcience as with Candles, be jealous of your ſelf; conſider, now is your time, what you do you muſt do quickly, the patience of God is waiting, Chriſt is knocking, the Spirit of God is ſtriving, and death is at the door: Oh now take your opportunity, and take heed leſt a ſlothful heart, and the cares of this World, or a preſumptuous confidence that all is well and ſafe already, ſhould at laſt ſhut you out of the Kingdom of God.

I cannot write diſtinctly to your Husband, but I beſeech you to call upon him to ſet his heart to theſe Counſels which I have written to you; I earneſtly entreat him to make Religion his buſineſs, and to look heedfully to it, that the gain of the World prove not the loſs of his ſoul. I deſire him that Cloſet and Family Prayers, and weekly Catechiſing

of

of his Houſhold, and ſtrict ſanctifying of the Sabbath, and reading of the Scriptures ſinging of Pſalms, repeating of Sermons, and diligent attendance upon powerful Preaching may be his continual exerciſes; that ſo his houſe may be a little Church, and God may delight to dwell in his Family: pray give me to underſtand what is done of theſe things, for I have a zeal for your welfare, and that you and your houſhould ſhould ſerve the Lord, that you may enter into his reſt, and carry children, and ſervants, and friends, and all to Heaven with you. As to my own eſtate, I have loſt all my limbs, and about this twelve Months uſeleſs, and been again and again under the ſentence of death; but was brought in a horſe-litter to *Bath*, where God hath wonderfully reſtored me, ſo that I can feed my ſelf, and go alone, and ſpeak with a little more freedom. Oh, love the Lord, praiſe the Lord for me; notwithſtanding I continue weak, and have not ſtrength to write, yet I could not tell how to die in ſilence from you; but have made uſe of a friendly hand to ſend theſe counſels and calls after you, which I beſeech you to accept in the fear of God, for it is not unlike that they may be my laſt to you that ever you may receive: I now commend you to the Lord, and with mine own and my dear Wives love to you both, Reſt,

Your loving and careful Uncle,

JOS. ALLEINE.

Octob. 21. 1668.

LETTER. XXXV.

[The Concernments of our Souls especially to be regarded.]

Dear Cousin,

YOu may think you are forgotten with me, because you have not heard so long a time from me; but this may let you know, That though God hath taken away your Father, and suffered your Mother to be helpless to you; Yet you have one friend on earth that careth for you. The welfare of your immortal soul is dear to me, and is the matter of my sollicitous care and prayer. *Dear Cousin*, methinks I feel a Godly jealousie of you within my heart, lest you should lose your soul amongst a croud of worldly cares and business. O remember the story of him in the Book of the *Kings*, who relates that he had a Soldier committed to his keeping, upon condition that he should lose his life if he did let him go: *But while thy servant went hither and thither, the man escaped.* But the King replies presently, *Even so shall thy judgement be; thy life shall go for his life.* Ah *Cousin*, take earnest heed, lest while you are going hither and thither, minding many things, tossed in a hurry of worldly affairs, the enemy run not away with your soul Oh beware that the World doth not secretly steal away your heart. Consider, that whatever your business be, you must and will have an eating time, and a sleeping time. Oh be as sollicitous every day to keep your praying times, which are a thousand times more necessary than a time to eat in, or sleep. Be sure that there doth not a morning or evening pass over your head, in which you have not perfumed your Closet with solemn and fervent prayer. And take heed, if you love your salvation, lest Satan beguile you with the bare outward performance of duties, and outward acts of Religion. See to it, that you do not rest in a Worldly Religion; to give God your knee, while the World carries away your heart. You may pray, hear, and read, and all to no purpose, except your very Soul be employed and engaged in these duties; and the

the life, vigour, and ſtrength of your affections be found to go after God in them. If therefore you will have Chriſt and Heaven, ſee that you renounce the world. You muſt caſt overboard your worldly hopes, and take up with God, with a naked Chriſt, as your whole happineſs, both for this life, and that which is to come. There is no hopes of your Salvation, without a ſound mortification to the world; you muſt be mortified to your worldly expectations: look not for much from the world; promiſe not your ſelf much from the world; ſeek not great things for your ſelf: ſay unto God, So I may have thee for my portion, and thy Kingdom for my inheritance, give or deny me what thou wilt, poverty or riches, any thing or nothing, I will be contented with my Lot. Say unto your ſoul, So I may but have Chriſt, ſo I may but carry it for the other world, let this world go which way it will: I muſt be converted or condemned; I muſt be born again, or elſe would I had never been born: but of this preſent world there is no ſuch neceſſity; I may be poor, and yet happy: but wo unto me if I remain unſanctified: I muſt have grace, or periſh for ever. *Dear Couſin*, if I live, you ſhall find me a friend to your worldly proſperity; but whether I live or die, I charge you by the Lord, that you be infinitely tender of your immortal ſouls everlaſting concernments. Will you not ſpin a fair thread of it, if while you are purſuing after earthly things, you loſe your ſoul in the throng? While I live, I ſhall pray and care for you. Farewel in the Lord. I am

Your truly loving and careful uncle,

JOS. ALLEINE.

LETTER, XXXVI.

[Godly Counſels.]

Dear Couſin,

THE welcome tydings of your ſafe arrival at *Barbadoes*, is come to my ears; as alſo the News of your eſcape from a perillous ſickneſs, for which *I* bleſs the Lord, and deſire to be thankful with you: for *I* am not without a care for your well being, but do look upon my ſelf as really concerned in you. *I* have conſidered, that God hath bereft you of a careful Father, and that your Mother takes but little care for you; ſo that you have none nearer than my ſelf to watch for your Soul, and to charge and admoniſh you in the Lord, and to take care of you. But yet, *Dear Couſin*, be not diſcouraged by theſe things, but look to Heaven, flie unto Jeſus, put away every known ſin, ſet upon the conſcientious performance of every known duty; make Chriſt your choice, embrace him upon his own terms; deliver up your ſelf, body and ſoul to him; ſee that you have no reſerves nor limitations in your choice of him; give him your very heart; caſt away your worldly hopes and expectations, make Religon your very buſineſs. O Couſin, theſe things do, and you ſhall be ſure of a friend in Heaven to take the care of you; and, if I may be any comfort to you, you ſhall not fail, while I live, to have one friend on earth to take care for you. You are gone far from me, even to the uttermoſt parts of the Earth; but I have ſent theſe Letters to call even thither after you; yea, not onely to call, but to cry in your Ears, O what is like to become of your Soul! Where is that immortal Soul of yours like to be lodged for ever? Amongſt Devils, or Angels? Upon a Bed of Flames, or in the joys of Paradiſe? Dear Couſin, go aſide by your ſelf in ſecret, retire from the noiſe of the World, and ſay to your ſelf, *Oh my Soul! whither art thou going? do not I know in my very heart that I muſt be converted or condemned? That I muſt be Sanctified, or I can never be Saved?* Oh my Soul! what ſeekeſt thou! what deſigns do

I drive at? what is my chief care? which way do *I* bend my course? Is it for this World, or the World to-come? Do I first seek the Kingdom of Heaven, and the Righteousness thereof? Do I think Heaven will drop into my mouth? that Glory and immortality will be got with a wet finger, with cold Prayers, and heartless wishes, while the World carries the main of my heart? Do I think to be Crowned, and yet never fight? to get the race, and never run? to enter at the strait gate, and never strive? to overcome Principalities and Powers, and never wrestle? No, no; say within your self, Oh my Soul, either lay by the hopes of Heaven for ever, or else rouse up thy self, put forth thy strength in seeking after God and Glory; either lay by thy Worldly hopes, or thy hopes of immortality; away with thy sins, or thou must let Christ go for ever; think not to have Christ and the World too, to serve God and Mammon, it cannot be: If thou follow the World as thy chief desire and delight; if thou live after the flesh, thou must die, count upon it, the Lord hath spoken it, and all the World can never reverse it. Thus reason the case with your own Soul, and give not rest to your self night nor day, till you are gotten off from the World, broken off from the wilfull practice of every known sin, and gotten safe into Christ. Dear Cousin, I charge you by the Lord, to observe these things; pray over them, weep over them, read them again and again; do not pass them over as slight and ordinary things: your Soul is at stake, it is your Salvation is concerned in them; think not I am in jest with you. Ah Cousin, I travel in birth with you, till Christ be formed in you. Why should you die? Oh repent and live, lay hold on eternal life, win Christ, and you win all. O be thankful to the Lord, that now you are fatherless and friendless, yet you have one Remembrancer to warn you to flie from the wrath to come. God forbid that I should find you at last in the place of Torments, for your not embracing the Godly Counsels. To conclude, in short, I charge you as a Minister, as a Father to you, Take heed of these three things:

1. *Lest the gain of the World prove the loss of your Soul:*

2. *Lest the snare of evil company withdraw you from God, and so prove your final ruine.*

 3. *Lest*

3. *Left a lofty and a worldly heart should thrust you out of the Kingdom of Heaven.*

God abhors that the proud should come near him: Oh labour, whatever you do, for an humble heart; be little, be vile in your own eyes; seek not after great things; be poor in Spirit; without this, Heaven will be no place for you, God will be no friend to you. Dear Cousin, your lot is fallen, as I fear, in a place of great wickedness, where your Soul is in much danger, where your temptations are many, and your helps for Heaven but few; where Godly examples are rare, and many will entice you to sin and vanity. O! if you love me, or love your Soul, look about you, consider your danger, fear left you should miscarry for ever by worldly loss and vain company, which proves to so many the fearful cause of their eternal perdition. I can but warn you, and pray for you: but though you have none to oversee you, remember the strict and severe eye of God is upon you, to observe all your actions, and that he will surely bring all your practices into his Judgement. Your Aunt, with my self, commend our dear love to you; and I commend you to the Lord, and remain,

Your loving and careful uncle,

August, 19. 1668.

JOS. ALLEINE,

LETTER XXXVII.

Dear Cousins,

THough you are removed far from me, out of my sight, and the Seas as a great Gulf are fixed betwixt you and me; yet my Prayers follow you, and my good wishes for your present and everlasting welfare, like the wings of a Dove, take speedy flight. I look upon my self, now God hath removed my Brother, to be as in the room of a Father to you, yea and of a Mother too; for I know you have but little help from her.

My

My Dear Neece, my heart is careful for you; and therefore I cannot ceaſe, while I am in being in this World, to warn and admoniſh you, as my Children, and to call upon you in the Name of the Eternal God, to awaken your ſelves with all Godly fear and holy diligence, leſt by any means you ſhould come ſhort of the glory of God.

Let me mind you, dear Couſins, of the dangerous place you ſtand in, and look about you with trembling. Methinks I ſee Satan watching for your Souls, as the Dragon did for the Seed of the Woman, waiting to devour it as ſoon as ſhe ſhould be delivered. Know you not, that you muſt wreſtle with Principalities and Powers? Methinks I ſee Temptations ſurrounding you, and belaguering you, as the enemy about the Walls of the Treacherous party within you, I mean carnal affections and corruptions, complotting how to deliver up the Caſtle. Know you not, that your fleſhly Luſts do war againſt your Souls? and that your own hearts are not true to you, but deceitful above all things? Lord, what need have you to beſtir your ſelves, and to flie unto Jeſus! to diſtruſt your ſelves, and to truſt onely in him and his Righteouſneſs! Oh work your Salvation with fear and trembling: Do you ever think to eſcape theſe mighty enemies, to conquer the power, and avoid the plots and ſnares of thoſe potent adverſaries, without moſt painful diligence? O cry to Heaven for help; watch and pray; fear, leſt a promiſe being left of entring into reſt, either of you ſhould come ſhort of it.

My dear Neeces, you have many do watch for your ſouls, to devoor them; but I doubt too few, except my ſelf, do watch for your Souls, to ſave them: therefore I look upon my ſelf, who am now upon the matter your only Monitor, to be the more concerned to awaken my ſelf to your help, and to look after you, and to watch for you, leſt by any means you ſhould miſcarry by the deceits and temptations wherewith you are encompaſſed. I would not have you over-careful for the things of this life, though I commend your laudable care and diligence, that you may not be burdenſome to any man; but I commend to you a better and more neceſſary care, and that is that which the Apoſtle ſpeaks of, the Virgins care; *The unmarried* (ſaith he) *c-*

reth

reth for the things of the Lord. Ah, let this be your care; ſeek firſt the Kingdom of God, and the Righteouſneſs thereof, and then all theſe things ſhall be added; you have Gods ſure promiſe for it: If the Lord give me to live and proſper, you ſhall ſee and know, that *I* am not a friend only in words to you; but however that ſhall be, ſee that you embrace the Counſels of God from me. Oh make ſure of Heaven betimes, walk humbly with God, beware of a proud heart and a lofty ſpirit; abhor your ſelves, elſe God will not be pleaſed with you; condemn your ſelves, that God may acquit you. The leven of pride will ſowre the whole lump, and mar all your Profeſſion and Religion, and render your Perſons, and Prayers, and all, an abomination to the Lord, if it prevail in you. Oh therefore be not high minded, but fear; and by prayer and watchfulneſs reſtrain and root up this wretched corruption of pride, which is a ſin ſo natural to you, that you had need to uſe an infinite care and caution to keep it under.

As to my ſelf, theſe may acquaint you, That *I* have been often at the very gates of death: *I* have loſt all my limbs; but prayer hath redeemed me from my extremities, and God hath bleſſed the uſe of the *Bath* to me. Oh praiſe the Lord, praiſe him for my ſake, and give glory to the God of my Life. Love him, honour and glorifie him, whoſe favour and friendſhip hath filled my Soul with comfort, and given a reſurrection to my body. I can now walk alone, and feed my ſelf, but am altogether unable to write, which is the reaſon why theſe come to you in another hand. Dear Couſin, you may think me too tedious; but you muſt pardon me, if *I* erre in my love and zeal for your welfare: And now I ſhall treſpaſs no more, but with my own and dear Wives love to you, I commend you to God, and reſt,

Your loving and careful uncle,

JOS. ALLEINE.

LET-

LETTER XXXVIII.

[Do all in reference to God and his Glory.]

Dear Friend,

I Have received yours of the 19th. of *September*, but it came to me in the time of my ſickneſs, in which I was much a ſtranger to writing; it continued upon me five months, and to this day ſo much weakneſs remains in my arms, that I am not able to put off or on my own clothes. Your Letter was exceeding welcome to me, not only as reviving the remembrance of our old friendſhip, but alſo, as bringing me news of ſome ſpiritual good that you received by me, which is the beſt tidings that I can receive: for what do I live for, but to be uſeful to ſouls in my generation? I deſire to know no other buſineſs than to pleaſe and honour my God, and ſerve my generation in that ſhort allowance of time that I have here, before I go hence, and ſhall be ſeen no more. Shall I commend to you the Leſſon that I am about to learn? But why ſhould I doubt of your acceptance, who have ſo readily embraced me in all our converſes?

The Leſſon is, *To be entirely devoted unto the Lord, that I may be able to ſay after the Apoſtle, To me to live is Chriſt.* I would not be ſerving God only for a day in the week, or an hour or two in the day; but every day, and all the day. I am ambitious to come up towards that of our Lord and Maſter, *To do always thoſe things that pleaſe God.* I plainly ſee, that ſelf-ſeeking is ſelf-undoing; and that then we do promote our ſelves beſt, when we pleaſe God moſt. I find, that when I have done all, if God be not pleaſed, I have done nothing; and if I can but approve my ſelf to God, my work is done: I reckon I do not live that time I do not live unto God.

I am fain to cut off ſo many hours from my days, and ſo many years from my life (ſo ſhort as it is) as I have lived unto my ſelf. I find no enemy ſo dangerous as my ſelf, and O that others might take warning by my hurt! O that I had lived wholly unto God! then had every day and every hour

hour that I have ſpent, been found upon my account at that great day of our appearing before God: then I had been rich indeed, in treaſure laid up there, whither I am apace removing; then I had been every day and hour adding to the heap, and encreaſing the reward which God of his meer grace hath promiſed, even to the meaneſt work that is done to him, *Col.* 3. 24. I verily perceive I am an external loſer by acting no more as for God; for what is done to my ſelf, is loſt; but what is done for God, is done for ever, and ſhall receive an everlaſting reward. Verily, if there be another world to come, and an eternal ſtate after this ſhort life, it is our only wiſdom to be removing, and, as it were, tranſplanting and tranſporting what we can, from hence, into that Countrey to which we are ſhortly to be removed, that what we are now doing, we may be reaping the fruit of for ever more. The world think themſelves wiſe; but I will pawn my ſoul upon it, that this is the true wiſdom.

Well, let us be wholly ſwallowed up in the concerns of Religion, and know no other intereſt but Jeſus Chriſts. I cannot ſay, I have already attained; but this is that my heart is ſet to learn, That in all that I do, whether ſacred or civil actions, ſtill I may be doing but one work, and driving on one deſign, *That God may be pleaſed by me, and he glorified in me*; that not onely my Praying, Preaching, Alms, *&c.* may be found upon my account; but even my eating, drinking, ſleeping, viſits, diſcourſes, becauſe they are all done as unto God. Too often do I take a wrong aim, and miſs my mark; but I will tell you what be the rules I ſet my ſelf, and do ſtrictly impoſe upon my ſelf from day to day: *Never to lie down, but in the Name of God*; not barely for natural refreſhment, but that a wearied ſervant of Chriſt may be recruited and fitted to ſerve him better the next day. *Never to riſe up, but with this reſolution, well, I will go forth this day in the Name of God, and will make Religion my buſineſs, and ſpend the day for Eternity. Never to enter upon my calling, but firſt thinking, I will do theſe things as unto God*; becauſe he requireth theſe things at my hands in the place and ſtation he hath put me into. *Never to ſit down to the Table, but reſolving, I will not eat meerly to pleaſe my appetite, but to ſtrengthen my ſelf for my Maſters work. Never to make a viſit,*

but

but upon ſome holy deſign, reſolving to leave ſomething of God where I go; and in every company to leave ſome good ſavour behind. This is that which I have been for ſome time a learning, and am preſſing hard after; and if I ſtrive not to walk by theſe Rules, let this Paper be a witneſs againſt me.

I am not now in my former publick capacity, ſuch things being required of me to ſay and ſubſcribe, as I could by no means yield to, without open lying and diſſembling with God and Men: yet, that I am unuſeful, I cannot ſay; but rather think, that poſſibly I may be of more uſe than heretofore. I thank the Lord, I have not known what it is to want a tongue to ſpeak, but in my ſickneſs; nor a people to hear; but ſo, as that we both follow the things that make for peace.

I perceive you are otherwiſe perſwaded in ſome things, than I am: but however, I truſt we meet in our end. Since you are in, may it be your whole ſtudy to gain ſouls, and to build them up in holineſs, which is with too many the leaſt of their cares. One duty (miſerably neglected) I ſhall be bold to commend to you from my own experience, and that is, the viſiting your whole Flock from houſe to houſe, and enquiring into their ſpiritual eſtates particularly, and dealing plainly and truly with them about their converſion to God: to the uſefulneſs of this great work, I can ſet my *Probatum eſt.*

I hear you have two Parſonages: O tremble to think how many precious ſouls you have to look to! and let it be ſeen, however others aim at the Fleece, you aim at the Flock; and that you have indeed *Curam animarum.*

You ſee how free I am with you; but I know your candor.

I rejoice in your happy Yoke-fellow: ſalute her from your old Friend, and accept the unfeigned reſpects of him who is, Sir,

Your real and faithful Friend,

JOS. ALLEINE.

L. F. T.

LETTER. XXXIX.

PRISON-COMFORTS.

[To a Minister in Prison.]

worthy Sir,

I Owe you a Letter, and more than a Letter, for your particular respects to me, your brotherly sympathy, your multiplied and earnest prayers, your tenderness of my health, your welcome Jewel in M. *Ruths* Letters, from which I trust my soul and others may reap no small benefit. Much more do I owe you for your common respects to the people of my desires; and not only to them, but to the whole Church of God; and in all whose concernments, I see, you are concerned. Your indefatigable labours with us, we do with all thankfulness accept, as the undoubted evidence of your great love: For all which may he requite you, who will shortly say, *Inasmuch as thou didst it unto the least of these my Brethren, thou didst it unto me.*

It was but a little after my release from my own confinement, but I heard of yours; and now write to you, as one that hath taken a higher degree than ever, and more truly honourable, being commenced Prisoner of Christ. I was once affected with the Picture of a devout man, to whom a voice came down from Heaven, saying, *Quid vis fieri pro te,* To which he answered, *Nihil domine nisi pati ac contemni pro te.* Undoubtedly, Sir, it is our real glory to be throughout conformed to Jesus Christ, not onely in his sanctity, but in his sufferings. *Paul* counted all things but dung for this, that he might win Christ, *&c.* and know the fellowship of his sufferings, and be made conformable to his death. I doubt not but your consolations in Christ do much more then superabound in all your tribulations for him: Yet let me add this one Cordial, That now you have a whole shoal of Promises come in to you, which you had not before; I mean, all the Promises to suffering Saints, in which they have not so immediate, but only a remoter right, unless in a suffering state:

And

And doubtleſs he hath gotten well, that hath gotten ſuch a number of exceeding great and precious Promiſes. If the men of the world do ſo rejoyce when ſuch or ſuch an Eſtate is fallen to them? ſhould not you much more, that have ſuch a Treaſure of Promiſes fallen to you?

I can tell you little good of my ſelf; but this I can tell you, That the Primiſes of God were never ſo ſweet in this world to me, as in and ſince my impriſoned ſtate. Oh the bottomleſs riches of the Covenant of Grace! It ſhames me that I have let ſuch a Treaſure lie by ſo long, and have made ſo little uſe of it. Never did my ſoul know the Heaven of a Believers life, till I learnt to live a life of praiſe, and by more frequent conſideration to ſet home the unſpeakable riches of the Divine Promiſes, to which, I truſt, through grace I am made an heir. I verily perceive, that all our work were done at once, if we could but prevail with our ſelves and others to live *like* Believers; to tell all the world by our ſelves and others to live like Believers; to tell all the world by our courſe and carriage, that there is ſuch pleaſantneſs in Chriſts wars, ſuch beauty in holineſs, ſuch reward to obedience, as we profeſs to believe. May ours and our peoples converſations but preach this aloud to the world, that there is a reality in what God hath promiſed; that Heaven is worth the venturing for; that the ſufferings of the preſent time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which ſhall be revealed in us!

Verily, Sir, it is but a very little while that Priſons ſhall hold us, or that we ſhall dwell in dirty fleſh. *Porphyry* tells us of *Photinus*, that he was aſhamed to ſee himſelf in the body; to ſee a Divine and immortal ſoul in a Priſon of fleſh, (for ſo they held the body to be;) but the worſt ſhackles are thoſe of ſin. Well, they muſt ſhortly off all together; our Lord doth not long intend us for this lower Region: Surely he is gone to prepare a place for us: Doubtleſs it is ſo; yea, and he will come again, and receive us to himſelf, that where he is, we may be alſo. And what have we to do, but to believe, and wait, and love, and long, and look out for his coming, in which is all our hope? 'Twill be time enough for us to be preferred then. We know before hand who ſhall then be uppermoſt. Our Lord hath ſhewed us

where

where our place shall be, even at his own right hand; and what he will say to us, *Come ye Blessed, &c.* Surely we shall stand in his Judgement: He hath promised to stand our Friend: Let us look for the joyful day: As sure as there is a God, this day will come; and then it shall go well with us. What if Bonds and Banishments abide us for a season? This is nothing but what our Lord hath told us, *The world shall rejoyce, but ye shall weep and lament: You shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.* Oh how reviving are his words! *I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoyce, and your joy no man taketh away from you.*

If that miserable wretch leapt chearfully off the Ladder, saying, *I shall be a Queen in Hell*: With that joy should we do and suffer for God, who have his Truth in pawn, that we shall be Crown'd in Heaven? Verily, they are wonderful Preparations that are making for us: The Lord prepare us apace, and make us meet to be Partakers. It was the highest Commendation that ever that worthy *R. Baxter* received, which fell from the Pen of his scoffing Adversary *Tilenus*, who saith of him, *Totum Puritanismum totus spirat.* Oh that this may be true of us and ours.

Let your true Yoke-fellow, and my Christian Friends with you in the Bonds of the Gospel, have my hearty Commendations: And these Counsels, *I* pray You, give them from me, for the improving of their present state.

1. *To habituate themselves, both as to their thoughts and discourse, more thoughly than ever unto Holiness.* Brethren, I wou'd teach you the Lesson that *I* resolve to learn with you, That your minds and tongues may as naturally run on the things of Heaven, as others on the things of this World. Why should it not be thus? *I* am sure God and heaven do as well deserve to be thought on, and talked of by us, as froth and vanity can deserve of the World. There are many that have in a great measure learnt this Lesson, and why should not we be some of them? What if it be hard at first? Every thing is so to a beginner. Besides, is not ours a Religion of self denial? Further, if we do but force our selves a while to holy Thoughts, and Heavenly Discourse, it will grow habitual to us, and then it will be most natural, familiar, and Heavenly sweet. Oh what gainers will you be, if you do but learn this Lesson? Verily,

Verily, 'tis the shame of Religion, that Christians are so unlike themselves, unless upon their knees. Sirs, our lives and language should tell the world what we are, and whether we are going. Christians, let little things content you in the world, but aspire after great things in the grace of God. Many real Christians do little think what high frames of holiness they might grow up to, even in this life, with pains and diligence. Sirs, be you men of great designs: think it not enough if you have wherewith to bear your charges to Heaven; but aspire with an holy ambition to be great in the Court of Heaven, favourites of the most High, of tall growth, great experience, singular communion, that you may burn and shine in your place, and convince the world; that you may savour of Heaven where ever you come, and that there may be an even-spun thred of Holiness running through your whole course. 'Tis the disgrace of Profession, that there is so little difference to be seen in the ordinary conversation of Believers from other men: It is not a shame, that when we are in company with others, this should be all the difference that is to be seen, only that we will not curse and swear, as do the worst of men? Christians, if you will honour the Gospel, bring forth your Religion out of your Closets (the world can't see what you do there) into your Shops, Trades, Visits, &c and exemplifie the rules of Religion in the management of all your Relations, and in your ordinary converse. Let there be no place or company that you come into, in which you do not drop something of God: this will be the glory of Religion, and we shall never convince the world till we come to this. May you come my Brethren, out of your Prisons with your faces shining, having your minds seasoned, and your tongues tipt with holiness: may your mouths be as a Well of Life, from whence may flow the holy Streams of edifying discourse: may you ever remember, as you are sitting in your houses, going by the way, lying down, rising up, what the Lord doth then require of you, *Deut.*6.7.

2. *To improve their present retirements from the World, for the setling of their spiritual Estates.* 'Tis a common complaint amongst Christians, that they want assurance. Oh, if any of you that wanted assurance when you came to Prison, may carry that blessing out, what happy gainers would you

 be?

be? Now you are called more than ever to self-searching. Now bring your Graces to the Touchstone. Be much in self observation. See what your hearts do with most love and delight, go out unto: what are your greatest hopes, and your chief designs. See whether God's Interest be uppermost in you: prove this, and prove all. Rest not in probable hopes. Think not that is enough that you can say, you hope 'tis well. God looks for extraordinary dispensation. Be restless till you can say, that you know 'tis well? that you know you are passed from death to life.

Think not that this is a priviledge that onely a few may expect. Observe but these three things:

1. *To acquaint your selves throughly with the condition of Life, and take heed of laying the marks of Salvation either too high or too low.*

2. *To be much in observing the frame, and bent, and workings of your own hearts.*

3. *To universally conscientious, and to be constant in even and close walkings*, and then I doubt not but you will grow up speedily to a settled assurance, nad know and feel that peace of God that passeth all understanding: and this will be somewhat worth your carrying out of Prison.

But I return to your self. But what shall I say? I have more need to receive from you, than ability to give; only I will tell you my wishes for you: I wish that your body may prosper, as your soul also prospereth. I wish, that you may see the travel of your Soul; that you may find your people thriving under your hands in all manner of holy conversation and godliness, that whosoever converses with them, may see and hear by them, *that God is in them of a Truth.* I wish your enlargement from your bonds, and your enlargement in them: that your Prison may be but the Lanthorn through which your Graces, Experiences, Communion, and Prison-attainments, may shine most brightly to all beholders. I wish your Prison may be a Paradice of Peace, and a *Patmos* of Divine discoveries. *Lord Jesus set to thy* Amen. *I* am, Sir,

Your unworthy Brother and Companion in the Kingdom and patience of Jesus,

Jan. 10. 1664. JOS. ALLEINE.

LET-

LETTER. XL.

[Directions to the Miniſters of *Somerſetſhire* and *Wiltſhire*, for the inſtructing of Families by way of Catechiſing.]

Sir,

THis Letter cometh to you, like the men of *Macedonia* to *Paul*, crying to you, *Come and help us.* O how inſufficient do we find our ſelves for the praiſes of God! what reaſon have we to call upon our ſelves, and to call upon all our Friends! and yet we foreſee that all will be too little a Sacrifice at laſt, and to ſlender a return to the moſt High God, God, who hath made us ſuch wonders of Mercy, and ſuch ſignal inſtances of his Divine Power and rich Grace. You are not ignorant of our Eſtate, how the Sentence of death had paſſed upon us; how our fleſh and our hearts failed, and friends an Phyſicians gave up their hopes: but God, that raiſed the Dead, was pleaſed to make us the Monuments of his wondrous mercy. O that the ſame God would make us the ſpecial inſtruments of his praiſe and glory. Of a Truth Sir, we perceive our hearts are too little, our Tongues are too ſhort, our expreſſions are too low, either to conceive or utter what we owe to the great God. O help! help! bleſs the Lord, O our ſouls: bleſs the Lord, O our friends: O that all that have wreſtled with God for us, might joyn hand in hand to make ſome ſuitable returns to the God of our lives, and may bring in every one his Sacrifice, and all contribute to make one common ſtock of Praiſes, that many thankſgivings may abound to God on our behalfs. O what hath Prayer done for us! while we live we muſt honour Prayer, and admire the power of Prayer, we owe our limbs and our lives to prayer. O that a goodly crop of praiſe may grow up unto God as a return for his Mercies: that the ſeed of prayers, and ſhowers of tears, may procure ſheaves of joy, and ſongs of deliverance.

But O what ſhall we render? wherewithall ſhall we come before the Lord, or bow our ſelves to the moſt high God?

O where ſhall we find a fitting ſacrifice? Verily we will give our ſelves and our all to him. But alas, what are we, and what is this little that we call *our All?* Therefore have we found in our hearts to write to you and others, that we might excite you to the Divine praiſes with us. And O that the Lord might be loved the better, and glorified the more for our ſakes: Will you tell us wherein we may ſhew our love to him? wherein we may beſt pleaſe and ſerve him? O that you would! herein aſſuredly you would moſt highly gratifie us. O that we might do ſome ſingular thing for God; for certainly they are not common things that he hath done for us. We pray you call upon thoſe that fear the Lord, to help us in celebrating his loving kindneſs. O how it pleaſeth our very hearts to think that God ſhould be loved and honoured the better for us: that we may be inſtruments, if it be but for the blowing up of one flaſh, nay, the kindling of one ſpark of Divine love in the heart of his Children towards him! Sir, you cannot pleaſure us in any thing ſo much as in this, to love and admire God, and ſpread his praiſe more and more; that what is wanting through our weakneſs, may be made up in your abundance. But we have need to crave your pardon for our length; but the love of Chriſt conſtraineth us, and we hope you will paſs by an error of love.

While we have been deviſing what to do for our God, we thought we could no way better him, than by providing ſuch as you are to ſet up his great Name with us. We love and honour you, not only as you are a Member, but a Miniſter of Chriſt Jeſus our Lord, and therefore deſerve to be doubly dear unto us: And becauſe we could think of no more pleaſing a Sacrifice of Thankſgiving, we have ſtirred up our ſelves and friends with us, to ſend to you a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, this poor token of love, which though but ſmall, yet we truſt will be a ſweet ſavour unto God, and will be accepted with you, being our two Mites caſt into God's Treaſury. But look not upon your ſelf as obliged to us hereby: but put it upon the account of Chriſt, to whoſe precious Name we dedicate, and from whom (although he be ſo much already before hand with us, yet) we expect a recompence at the Reſurrection of the Juſt.

And

And being further desirous to promote the work of God in our low and slender capacities, we have been bold to provoke your self, with other our Fathers and Brethren in the Ministry, to set about that necessary and much neglected work of Catechising; not a little pleasing our selves in the sweet hope, that by your means we may be instrumental to spread the sweet savour of the knowledge of our God, in every place: and being well perswaded of your readiness to forward so blessed a work, we have stirred up our selves and our friends to expend a considerable sum of money to furnish Ministers with Catechisms, a hundred whereof we have sent unto you, beseeching you to use your best prudence and utmost diligence for the spreading of them, and for others improvement by them, that our labour and charge in so good a work, prove not at last of no effect.

Sir, we shall humbly propose unto you, but not impose upon you. But let us be bold with you in Christ, to lay our requests before you as touching this concernment, they being indeed what judicious friends and brethren have thought fit to propound.

1. That that people be publikely and privarely instructed about the high necessity and great usefulness of this duty.

2. That the Catechisms be freely given to all that will promise to use them.

3. That you would be pleased to acquaint your self with all the Schools that are within your Verge; and that you would do your utmost to engage the Teachers thereof to teach their Scholars this Catechism; and that you would furnish all their Scholars that are capable and willing to learn.

4. That you will endeavour from house to house to engage the Master or Mistress of every Family, for the forwarding of this work.

5. That you will appoint set-times wherein to take an account of the proficiency of all such as have promised to learn; and that, if it may be, they may be engaged to learn weekly a proportion, according to their Capacities.

6. That you would favour us so far, as to let us know as speedily as you may, of the receit of these lines; and, if we may presume so far upon you, we pray you to indulge us some

 assurance

assurance under your hand, that you will to your power promote this happy design, and that by our *Lady-day* next you will acquaint Mr. *Bernard* what progress is made.

Sir, our souls will even travel in Birth for the success of this undertaking; and therefore we request you for the love of God, and by the respect which we are perswaded you bare to us, that you will labour to comfort and encourage us in our endeavours for God, which you can no way in the World do so well, as by letting us see, that there is some blessed fruit of our cost and pains; and that we have not run in vain, nor laboured in vain. If there be any of these Catechisms remaining in your hands that you cannot dispose of by our *Lady-day*, be pleased to send them to Mr. *Bernard*, or to Mr. *Rositer* in *Taunton*. If you should need any more, give us speedy notice, and you shall not fail to be furnished with what number you desire.

Thus upon the bended knees of our thankful souls, we commend our poor sacrifices, together with your self, to the eternal God, and remain,

Christs devoted Servants, and your Friends,

JOS. BERNARD.
and
JOS. ALLEINE.

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FINIS.